BAC-BR-18471

Professor Euan M Wallace AM
Secretary
Department of Health

50 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Secretary

**STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH’S CHILD SAFE STANDARDS REGULATOR**

I am pleased to provide you with my expectations for the Department of Health’s (the department) Child Safe Standards Regulator to guide the regulator’s business planning processes.

In my portfolio, as Minister for Health I administer a range of Acts and regulations designed to promote wellbeing and to protect the health of the Victorian community.

I am committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Victorians. This includes promoting the safety of children, preventing child abuse and ensuring health service organisations and businesses have effective processes in place to respond to and report all allegations of child abuse.

As Minister for Health, I am responsible for ensuring relevant health entities comply with the Child Safe Standards as set by the Minister for Child Protection under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (the Act).

Based on consultation with the department about the government’s priorities and emerging risks, my expectations for the Child Safe Standards Regulator team are as follows:

* Build connections with departmental program areas and the Commission for Children and Young People to establish a comprehensive database via relevant service agreements with co-regulators and data owners.
* Develop an evidence-based risk profiling methodology so that compliance monitoring can be targeted to sector categories or entity types that present the highest risk to the safety of children.
* Benchmark current levels of compliance by entities as a baseline for future evaluation of the impacts of regulatory interventions and the efficacy of the Child Safe Standards in achieving child safety outcomes in the health sector.
* Develop business plans to set out the Regulator’s strategic focus areas and allocate effort and resources towards areas of greatest risk to the safety of children.
* Design and prepare reports to satisfy the requirements of the Act, align with the reporting of co-regulators and meet departmental reporting requirements.
* Undertake significant stakeholder consultation and engagement to ensure that health sector entities understand the new Regulator’s statutory role, their obligations under the Standards and how the regulator intends to monitor and enforce compliance.

In addition, I expect all regulators in the health portfolio to commit to and action:

* Contributing to health, wellbeing, and safety outcomes for Aboriginal people and the advancement of Aboriginal self-determination.
* Climate change adaptation and enhancing health system resilience through the improvement of environmental sustainability.

I request the department’s Child Safe Standards Regulator incorporate these expectations into their business plans and include milestones for when the team will meet these expectations, and report on progress. The business plans should also include appropriate milestones to review the content of this letter and to advise me when it needs to be updated or renewed. At any time, I may request that you report on meeting my expectations or issue a new statement of expectations letter.

I further request the department’s Child Safe Standards Regulator to undertake a light touch review of the expectations in this letter as part of their annual reporting obligations and to advise me if there are any refinements they would recommend.

I look forward to the Child Safe Standards Regulator working continuously towards achieving best practice in the administration and enforcement of regulation.

Yours sincerely

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**

 1 / 7 / 2023