



Introduction

Following an assessment of service delivery needs and discussions with The Hon Katrine Hildyard MP Minister for Child Protection, Jackie Bray, CEO of the Department of Child Protection, fulfilled her offer to provide a seconded Social Worker to Grandcarers SA.

On 14 May 2025 Senior Social Worker Sue Neumann joined Grandcarers SA as part of her Return-to-Work Program. Initially working for two days per week gradually increasing to four days per week, an arrangement which continues until the end of 2025.

To date her involvement with the organisation and clients has included:

1. Individual Client Support

Through the Grandcarers SA telephone helpline and face to face opportunities with 56 clients providing:

- Confidential support, guidance and referrals
- Personalised and practical advice tailored for each family, with the child's best interest at its core.
- Support to navigate Child Protection, Family Law and various state and federal agency systems and processes.

2. Supporting Peer Support Group Villages:

Facilitating and supporting clients at 19 Villages. Grandcarers SA Villages provide peer support for grandparent and other kinship carers to breach isolation, share challenges, explore solutions, develop connections and identify accessible services.

3. Community Engagement:

- Attended Stakeholder Action Groups and Forums to ensure the needs of clients was properly represented
- Attended Grandcarers SA Information Workshops to offer grandparent and kinship carers support through their learning and understanding.

4. Student Supervision:

Providing course learning guidance, practical information and placement supervision to students studying Social Work or Community Services through Higher Education whilst completing their formal placement at Grandcarers SA.

Guiding interaction with, and the processes of, other agencies, e.g. Foodbank referrals.

5. Other duties undertaken:

- Providing advice to staff relating to complex Education and Development Fund Applications
- Updating and adding new clients to the client database
- Attend and provide a professional perspective at staff meetings and catch-ups.



Social Worker Support for Grandcarers SA

The case to continue to a Social Worker at Grandcarers SA

This new level of professional support and experience has raised the bar of the organisation and the expectations of our clients.

Grandparents and kinship carers who provide care to children through formal Department of Child Protection (DCP) arrangements already have the advantage of being supported by Kinship Care Support Workers who have regular face to face contact with their clients.

Informal (full time) grandparents and kinship carers are not afforded the same support by DCP and are disadvantaged in this area.

Grandcarers SA is limited in its service delivery by the lack of professional staff who have such qualifications, experience and expertise. Our largely volunteer workforce is unable to provide a more holistic service to those carers who fall outside the remit of Carers SA , The Carers Gateway and SA Government Supports.

An ongoing professional social worker resource in Grandcarers SA would enhance the lives and wellbeing of our clients by providing regular, face to face and home visit support to help clients provide the best care they can to the children and young people in their care.

An ongoing social worker resource could also provide clients with support to:

- navigate the Family Court System
- participate in Mediation to secure care arrangements to provide certainty and stability for carers and children in their care
- understand the importance of secure attachment relationships, child development, including identifying developmental delays
- access early intervention services
- navigate the NDIS system.
- understand complex trauma, behaviours relating to trauma, behaviour management and positive parenting outcomes
- maintaining family connections, contact visits and managing family conflict around contact visits.
- access to educational facilities/services that meets the children's needs.
- access other identified services and agencies.

I ask that Grandcarers SA is either funded to include, or are provided with, a qualified and experienced Social Worker on an ongoing basis.