

Health and Development Participation Grant Program – program logic

Current situation	Evidence	Activities	Theory of change	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Mid-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>In NSW, there are still too many children starting school developmentally off track. The 2021 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) found that over 44% of NSW children are not developmentally on track when they start school. Almost half of all 4-year-old children do not get their recommended health and development check (HDC). To address this issue the NSW Government is rolling out free HDCs for 4-year-old children at their preschool or long day care across all local health districts in NSW by the end of 2024.</p> <p>NSW Department of Education has heard feedback from the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector that additional support is needed for ECEC services to participate in the HDC program to overcome key challenges (1). Key barriers to participation that require addressing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce capacity • Lack of suitable space for conducting HDCs • Lack of Allied Health service resources available to support ECEC services in addressing child development needs identified in the HDCs. <p>Target groups</p> <p>Eligible ECEC services that may participate in the HDC program in 2024, including Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services, Aboriginal Child and Family Centres and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations that deliver ECEC.</p>	<p>Supporting evidence from the First 2000 Days Framework (PD2019_008) indicates that children who participate in ECEC and who get sufficient support services such as HDCs, are more likely to succeed at school and have improved lifelong educational, social, and economic outcomes.</p> <p>Usage of developmental checks (such as the HDCs) during the first 2000 days of a child's life as associated with factors that improve the quality of a child's life. Evidence has highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who receive developmental screening (compared to those who received no screening) were more likely to be referred for early intervention to address developmental delays in a timely fashion (4, 5). • Developmental screening tools adapted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have shown effectiveness Identifying developmental delays for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.(6) • The Blue Book indicates the importance of HDCs in tracking growth and identifying potential developmental issues early.(7) <p>Based on sector feedback (3) community preschools and small ECEC services would benefit from supports to fully participate in implementing NSW early childhood education reforms such as the HDC program.</p> <p>Grants supporting skill development and training can assist ECEC services in addressing workforce challenges (10)</p> <p>A recent report highlighted the important role of a separate space to conduct HDCs, which may be undertaken at an ECEC/ adjoining site, a nearby venue, or child and family health service. (11)</p>	<p>The grant can be used to fund:</p> <p>Category 1: Staffing support for participation in the HDC Program</p> <p>Category 2: Suitable space for participation in the HDC Program</p> <p>Category 3: Building capacity of ECEC educators and teachers to support children's developmental needs.</p>	<p>The grant will support not-for-profit preschools and long day cares, Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services, Aboriginal Child and Family Centres and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations that deliver ECEC; and standalone for-profit long day cares to participate in the HDC program.</p> <p>Funding across categories 1 and 2 will assist in addressing key barriers to participation and by broadening the reach of the HDC program more 4-year-old children will receive this important check and any additional supports needed identified sooner.</p> <p>Funding under category 3 will support ECEC educators and teachers to increase their capacity to support children's developmental needs and will ensure children are provided with support while awaiting further assessment and Allied Health support.</p>	<p>Number of approved providers that receive the HDP Grant and take part in the HDC Program/ deliver HDCs in 2024.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of service providers participating in the HDC Program in 2024.</p> <p>Indicators</p> <p>Number of ECEC services that have taken part in the HDC Program as HDP Grant recipients by the end of 2024.</p> <p>Number of approved providers that report the HDP Grant enabled their participation in the HDC Program.</p> <p>Number of HDP Grant recipients as a proportion of the number of services that participated in the HDC Program.</p> <p>Sector insights:</p> <p>Eligible ECEC services provide input (through grant applications) on their areas of need to support participation in the HDC Program.</p>	<p>ECECs remain consistently engaged in the HDC Program over time.</p> <p>Indicators</p> <p>Number of HDP Grant recipients who continue to take part in the HDC Program after the end of the 2024 HDP Grant program.</p> <p>Eligible</p> <p>ECEC services report the grant supported them to increase delivery of HDCs over time.</p>	<p>The HDP Grant will support an increase in the number of eligible services that participate in the HDCs Program. This will directly support the HDCs Program and its outcomes which are found here in the HDC logic model.</p>