

Eligibility for a Care Leavers Program

Supporting Social Impact Investment in South Australia

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Disclaimer

The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of our government partners.

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Who we are

The *BetterStart* Health and Development Research comprises inter-disciplinary researchers from epidemiology, public health, criminology, paediatrics, biostatistics, and psychology who are trying to better understand how to ensure infants and children have the best start in life that will enhance their health, development and human capability formation over the life course.

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Objective

This report presents the results of analysis for the “Care Leavers Cohort” to inform the Social Impact Investing (SII) in South Australia.

The report is presented in 4 parts:

Part 1: Cohort eligibility;

Part 2: Characteristics of the cohort

Part 3: Selected examples of SA government service use; and

Part 4: Commonwealth welfare outcomes.

Definition

The definition of a care leaver is a young person who leaves care when:

(a) is more than 16, but less than 26, years of age; and (b) was, at any stage, under the guardianship or custody of the Chief Executive or another person pursuant to this Act or the Children's Protection Act 1993 for a period of 6 months or more (or such lesser period as may be allowed by the Minister).

The primary analysis is based on young people 17 to 25 years who left care in the financial year 2008/2009 through to 2018/2019.

Main findings

- In 2018/2019 there were 121 care leavers.

Characteristics of Care Leavers:

- 63.7% were aged 17 years when they left care.
- Over 70% had spent 5 or more years in care.
- 9 in 10 were on a GOM 18 order at last placement.
- 20.5% had spent most of their time in OOHC in a non-family based care type.
- 46.0% were in a non-family based care type at their last placement.
- 1 in 5 experienced Youth Justice supervision.
- 57.0% of those who were predominantly in a non-family-based care type experienced YJ supervision compared to 10.6% who were predominantly in family-based care.

State outcomes for Care Leavers:

- 1 in 4 had contact with Homelessness services over 2 years following leaving care.
- 30.2% had at least one hospitalisation over 2 years following leaving care, while 8.9% had 3 or more hospital admissions during this period.
- Care leavers predominantly in non-family-based care were 1.6 times (44.4%/ 27.0%) more likely to have a hospital admission compared to family based care.
- 7.9% had a drug and alcohol related hospitalisation over 2 years following leaving care.
- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.7 times (20.0%/5.4%) more likely to have a drug and alcohol related hospital admission compared to family based care.
- 11.6% had at a mental health related hospitalisation over 2 years following leaving care
- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.4 times (18.5%/ 5.4%) more likely to have a mental health related hospital admission compared to family based care.
- 51% had at least one ED presentation over 2 years following leaving care, while 17.5% had 3 or more ED presentations during this period.
- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 1.6 times (72.6%/46.4%) more likely to have an ED presentation compared to care leavers mostly in family based care.
- 7.4% had a drug and alcohol related ED presentation over 2 years following leaving care.
- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.5 times (13.3%/3.8%) more likely to have a drug and alcohol related ED presentation compared to young people mostly in family based care.
- 13.6% had a mental health related ED presentation over 2 years following leaving care.
- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.2 times (29.6%/9.2%) more likely to have a mental health related ED presentation compared to family based care.

Federal outcomes for Care Leavers:

- About 95% of care leavers received a welfare payment within 2 years from leaving care. The patterns were the same after 5 years from leaving care.
- 49.2% of care leavers received a Newstart payment within 5 years from leaving care.
- Almost 1 in 5 had received a parenting payment within 5 years from leaving care.

Our interpretation:

We think the key take home messages are:

- There are about 100 to 120 care leavers each year and 90% of them exit care from a GOM 18.
- 20.5% had spent most of their time in OOHC in a non-family based care type.

For state outcomes, care leavers were:

- 10 times more likely to have experienced Youth Justice supervision
- 10 times more likely to have contact with homelessness services
- 6 times more likely to be admitted to hospital
- 5 times more likely to present to ED
- Hospital admissions and ED presentations seem to be relatively high for mental health and drug and alcohol related problems.
- The group of care leavers who were predominantly in non-family based care had an even higher concentration of these patterns of state service use.

For federal outcomes:

- As expected, care leavers had relatively frequent contact with the welfare system, such as Youth allowance.
- Almost 50% of care leavers had received a Newstart payment within 5 years of leaving care.
- While we do not currently have enough data to quantify the total lifetime cost of Newstart payments to the care leavers cohort, this could be done in the future.

About this report

This final report responds to a request from SA Department of Treasury and Finance to provide background data to inform Social Impact Investing (SII) in South Australia for a care leavers cohort.

Data sources

Data comes from the Better Evidence Better Outcomes Linked Data platform (BEBOLD) using information from:

- SA Department for Child Protection;
- Integrated South Australian Activity Collection (ISAAC) Data, SA Health;
- Emergency Department Data Collection (EDDC), SA Health;
- Youth Justice SA Department of Human Services;
- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), Department for Education
- Homelessness data, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion; and
- Commonwealth DOMINO data.

The aim of the reports that we deliver to government is to provide an evidence base from which decisions can be made that will lead to improved outcomes for families and children experiencing different forms of disadvantage. However, as these reports primarily focus on data analysis, this can appear to depersonalise the real-life experiences that underlie these data. We would like to acknowledge the data in these reports represent serious experiences that can have a lifelong impact on children and families.

Using data in this way is only one way to tell important stories, however, we hope that this work contributes to ensuring South Australia is able to make more informed decisions about how best to support children and families.

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Part 1. Cohort eligibility

The definition of a care leaver is a young person who leaves care when:

- Is more than 16, but less than 26 years of age; and
- Was, at any stage, under the guardianship or custody of the Chief Executive or another person pursuant to this Act or the Children's Protection Act 1993 for a period of 6 months or more (or such lesser period as may be allowed by the Minister).

Number eligible for Care Leavers cohort for the whole of South Australia

Interpretation:

- In 2018/19 there were n=121 eligible young people leaving care.

Table 1: Number of eligible young people leaving OOHC in each financial year from July 2008 to June 2019

Year at the end of last placement	n	col %
2008/2009	80	6.0
2009/2010	111	8.3
2010/2011	122	8.3
2011/2012	135	10.0
2012/2013	114	8.5
2013/2014	143	10.6
2014/2015	144	10.7
2015/2016	120	8.9
2016/2017	118	8.8
2017/2018	136	10.1
2018/2019	121	9.0
Total	1,344	100.0

Part 2. Characteristics of the cohort

We present data for the three most recent Care Leavers cohorts (2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19) n=375. Data for all cohorts from 2008/2009 to 2018/2019 are presented in Appendix A.

Interpretation

- 17.9% of the eligible care leavers were under 1 year of age when they first experienced OOHC, while 63.7% left care at 17 years-old.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics, Care Leavers cohort who left OOHC from 2016/17 to 2018/2019, n=375

	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		Total	
	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %
Gender								
Male	64	54.2	64	47.1	66	54.5	194	51.7
Female	54	45.8	72	52.9	55	45.5	181	48.3
Aboriginal and/or Torres strait Islander								
Yes	31	26.3	41	30.1	41	33.9	113	30.1
No	87	73.7	95	69.9	80	66.1	262	69.9
Age at first placement (years)								
<1	21	17.8	25	18.4	21	17.4	67	17.9
1-5	46	39.0	35	25.7	46	38.0	127	33.9
6-11	32	27.1	41	30.1	34	28.1	107	28.5
>11	19	16.1	35	25.7	20	16.5	74	19.7
Age at the end of last placement (years)								
17	77	65.3	91	66.9	71	58.7	239	63.7
18/19/ 20	41	34.7	45	33.1	50	41.3	136	36.3
Total	118	100.0	136	100.0	121	100.0	375	100.0

Time spent in care

Interpretation

- Over 70% of eligible care leavers spent 5 years or more in care.

Table 3: Time spent in care, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2018/2019, n=1,344

Time spent in care	n	col%
6 months to 1 year	57	4.2
1 to 3 years	156	11.6
3 to 5 years	150	11.2
5 to 10 years	397	29.5
10 to 15 years	362	26.9
More than 15 years	222	16.5
Total	1,344	100.0

Order type at final placement

Interpretation

- 9 in 10 young people left care when they were on a GOM 18 order.

Table 4: Order type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2018/2019, n=1,300

	n	col%
Order type at final placement		
Guardianship of Minister 18yrs (GOM 18)	1,159	89.2
Immigration order	87	6.7
Other order types	54	4.2
Total	1,300	100.0

It was not possible to identify the order for n=44 young people because of missing data.

Other order types include Family Care Meeting Outcome, G/ship of Minister 12mths, VCA Custody of Minister, Children's Protection And Young Offenders Act, 1979, Guardianship or Custody Order Granted Interstate.

Care type

In order to build the indicators of care type, the first step was to define family and non-family based care types. We define 'family based care' to include kinship, foster or specific child only care. We define 'non-family based care' to include residential care, commercial property and independent living.

Table 5: Family and non-family based care definitions

Family based care	Non-family based care
Foster care	Residential care
Kinship care	Commercial property
Specific child only care	Independent living

Specific child only care. A category of approved carer, as established by the Chief Executive under section 70(1) of the CYPS Act. An SCO carer is defined as a person approved to provide care, in their own home, to a specific child or children with whom they have a connection (that does not fit the definition of kinship care) through their personal, professional or ethno-specific community life (which includes sharing a cultural, ethnic or religious community connection with the child), without, in some instances, directly knowing the child or the child's family. The definition of a specific child only carer includes a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural background that is not known to the child and is not considered kin by the family or those with cultural authority for the child. Examples include a teacher, nurse, child care worker, DCP staff member, neighbour, or sporting club member.

A challenge in creating care types for older cohorts

There is a challenge in creating Indicator 1- predominant type of care over the life course- using the older data system (CIS) because multiple placements do not have a care type recorded. This is less the case for the most recent data being used for Indicators 2 and 3 below, which rely on last placement or placements over the last year.

Table 6: Indicators of care type

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course	Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement	Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year
Definition	This indicator reflects the predominant type of care over the life course of young people.	This indicator was an attempt to create a variable that reflects the most recent type of care.	This indicator was an attempt to create a variable that reflects the most recent type of care over the last year of care.
Categories	-Mostly in family based care (51%-100%) -Mostly in non-family based care (51%-100%)	-Family based care -Non-family based care	-Mostly in family based care (51%-100%) -Mostly in non-family based care (51%-100%)
Exclusions	Out of the n=1,344 eligible young people from July 2008 to June 2019, n=1,188 (88%) were eligible for this indicator (n=156 young people spent 20% or more of their total time in care in an unknown care type).	Out of the n=1,344 eligible young people from July 2008 to June 2019, n=1,317 (98%) were eligible for this indicator (n=27 young people had an unknown care type in their last placement).	Out of the n=1,344 eligible young people from July 2008 to June 2019, n=1,309 (97%) were eligible for this indicator (n=35 young people spent 20% or more of their total time in care in the last year in an unknown care type).

Care types

We present data for the three most recent Care Leavers cohorts (2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19) n=375. Data for all cohorts from 2008/2009 to 2018/2019 are presented in Appendix B.

Interpretation

- 20.5% of young people spent most of their time in OOHC in a non-family based care type (Indicator 1).
- 46.0% were in a non-family based care type at their last placement (Indicator 2).
- 44.7% spent most of their last year in care in a non-family based care type (Indicator 3).

Table 7: Care type among the eligible cohorts, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2016/2017 to 2018/2019, n=375

Year at the end of last placement	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	row%	n	row%	n	col%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%
2016/2017	94	81.0	22	19.0	116	100.0	76	64.4	42	35.6	118	100.0	76	64.4	42	35.6	118	100.0
2017/2018	102	77.9	29	22.1	131	100.0	72	52.9	64	47.1	136	100.0	74	54.4	62	45.6	136	100.0
2018/2019	94	79.7	24	20.3	118	100.0	59	48.8	62	51.2	121	100.0	62	51.2	59	48.8	121	100.0
Total	290	79.5	75	20.5	365	100.0	207	56.7	168	46.0	375	100.0	212	58.1	163	44.7	375	100.0

Youth Justice (YJ) contact

In SA, the minimum age of criminal responsibility is 10 years. The period of eligibility for YJ supervision in SA is from age 10 to 17 years.

We currently hold YJ data from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2016. Therefore, young people leaving care from 2008/2009 to 2015/16 were included since they had data for their entire YJ eligibility period (10 to 17 years-old) (n=969).

Interpretation

- 1 in 5 care leavers had experienced YJ supervision.
- YJ supervision for care leavers was 10 times higher than YJ supervision in the whole of South Australia (1.9%) (Malvaso et al. 2020).

Table 8: Youth justice supervision between 10 to 17 years-old, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
YJ contact		
Yes	193	19.9
No	776	80.1
Total	969	100.0

Reference: Malvaso, C., Santiago, P., Pilkington, R., Montgomerie, A., Delfabbro, P., & Lynch, J. (2020). *Youth Justice supervision in South Australia*. BetterStart Child Health and Development Research Group: The University of Adelaide.

Youth Justice (YJ) supervision by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, of care leavers who were predominantly in a non-family-based care type, 57% had experienced YJ supervision compared to 10.6% who were predominantly in family-based care.

Table 9: Youth justice supervision between 10 to 17 years-old according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
YJ contact																		
Yes	73	10.6	77	57.0	150	18.2	41	6.6	140	43.8	181	19.2	40	6.4	141	45.8	181	19.4
No	615	89.4	58	43.0	673	81.8	581	93.4	180	56.3	761	80.8	586	93.6	167	54.2	753	80.6
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

Part 3. Selected examples of SA government service use

Homelessness services

An indicator of contact with homelessness services was obtained from the South Australia's Housing Authority Homeless to Home ('H2H') data system. H2H collects case management and client data from all government funded specialist homelessness services in South Australia.

We currently hold Homelessness data from 1st of July 2011 to 30th September 2018. Care leavers in 2011/12 to 2015/16 were followed for 2 years post final placement (n=656). This means we can observe contact with Homelessness services for every young person for 24 months.

Interpretation

- 25.8% of care leavers had contact with Homelessness services over the 2 years following the end of their last placement.
- By way of comparison, in South Australia, 2.4% of young people who were 17 years of age in 2012 had contact with homelessness services over a two-year period following their 17th birthday.
- While they are not directly comparable because the care leavers' cohort includes 17 to 20 year-olds, this gives some indication that homelessness service use in this population was substantially high.

Table 10: Contact with Homelessness services over 2 years following end of last placement, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2011/12 to 2015/16, n=656

	n	col%
Contact with homelessness services		
Yes	169	25.8
No	487	74.2
Total	656	100.0

Contact with Homelessness services by care type

Interpretation

- Care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care (Indicator 1) were almost 2 times (39.8%/ 20.9%) more likely to have contact with homelessness services.
- This pattern was mirrored across all care type indicators.

Table 11: Contact with Homelessness services over 2 years following end of last placement, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2011/12 to 2015/16, n=656

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
Homelessness services																		
Yes	101	20.9	43	39.8	144	24.3	79	18.9	87	37.7	166	25.5	80	19.0	82	36.8	162	25.2
No	383	79.1	65	60.2	448	75.7	340	81.1	144	62.3	484	74.5	341	81.0	141	63.2	482	74.8
Total	484	100.0	108	100.0	592	100.0	419	100.0	231	100.0	650	100.0	421	100.0	223	100.0	644	100.0

Hospital admissions

We present hospital admissions over a 2 year-period period following the end of last placement for care leavers who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016 (n=969).

This means we can observe hospitalisations for every young person for 24 months.

Interpretation

- 30.2% of care leavers had at least 1 hospitalisation and 8.9% had 3 or more hospitalisations.
- While 3.3% had a PPH related hospitalisation, standard adult definitions of PPHs do not adequately include mental health and drug related conditions.
- By way of comparison, in South Australia, 5.2% of young people who were 17 years of age in 2012 had a hospital admission over a two-year period following their 17th birthday.
- While they are not directly comparable because the care leavers' cohort includes 17 to 20 year-olds, this gives some indication that hospital admissions in this population was substantially high.

Table 12: Hospital admissions over 24 months following end of last placement, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one hospitalisation		
No	676	69.8
Yes	293	30.2
Number of hospitalisations		
0	676	69.8
1	144	14.9
2	63	6.5
3 or more	86	8.9
At least one Potentially Preventable Hospitalizations (PPHs)		
No	937	96.7
Yes	32	3.3
Total	969	100.0

Note:

a: PPHs are hospitalisations thought to have been avoidable if timely and adequate non-hospital care had been provided, either to prevent the condition occurring, or to prevent the hospitalisation for the condition. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. National healthcare agreement: Pi 18-Selected potentially preventable hospitalisations, 2015, 2016. Available: <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/559032>.

Hospital admissions by care type

Interpretation

- According to Indicator 1, care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 1.6 times (44.4%/ 27%) more likely to have a hospital admission compared to care leavers mostly in family based care.
- The proportion of care leavers with 3 or more hospitalisations was 14.8% among those predominantly in non-family-based care, compared to 6.5% among young people mostly in family based care.
- These patterns are mirrored across all care type indicators.

Table 13: Hospital admissions by care type over 24 months following end of last placement, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one hospitalisation																		
No	502	73.0	75	55.6	577	70.1	472	75.9	187	58.4	659	70.0	475	75.9	181	58.8	656	70.2
Yes	186	27.0	60	44.4	246	29.9	150	24.1	133	41.6	283	30.0	151	24.1	127	41.2	278	29.8
Number of hospitalisations																		
0	502	73	75	55.6	577	70.1	472	75.9	187	58.4	659	70.0	475	75.9	181	58.8	656	70.2
1	101	14.7	23	17.0	124	15.1	83	13.3	57	17.8	140	14.9	83	13.3	56	18.2	139	14.9
2	40	5.8	17	12.6	57	6.9	31	5	31	9.7	62	6.6	32	5.1	26	8.4	58	6.2
3 or more	45	6.5	20	14.8	65	7.9	36	5.8	45	14.1	81	8.6	36	5.8	45	14.6	81	8.7
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

Note: PPHs not presented according to care type due to small numbers.

Drug and Alcohol related hospital admissions

We used three definitions for drug and alcohol related admissions provided by DASSA, AIHW (primary diagnosis only) and AIHW (primary and secondary diagnoses).

Interpretation

- 7.9% of care leavers had at least one drug and alcohol related hospital admission (DASSA definition).

Table 14: Drug and alcohol hospital related admissions over a 24 months period following leaving care, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (DASSA definition, including secondary diagnoses)^a		
No	892	92.1
Yes	77	7.9
At least one drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (AIHW definition, primary diagnosis only)^b		
No	914	94.3
Yes	55	5.7
At least drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (AIHW definition, including secondary diagnoses)^c		
No	887	91.5
Yes	82	8.5
Total	969	100.0

a: DASSA definition, including secondary diagnoses:

Includes admissions to hospital for any ICD-10-AM codes across principal and secondary diagnoses related to:

- Mental or Behaviour Disorders due to use of alcohol and other specified drugs (F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19); or
- External causes related to
 - Assault by drugs, medicaments of biological substances (X85); or
 - Accidental poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (X41, X42, X44); or
 - Intentional self-harm from poisoning, including suicide (X61, X62, X64); or
 - Event of undetermined intent involving poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (Y11, Y12, Y14); or
- Poisoning by drugs (T40.0- T40.9, T42.3, T42.4, T42.6, T42.7, T43.3, T43.5, T43.6, T43.8, T43.9)

b: AIHW definition, primary diagnosis only

Includes a principal diagnosis of: (F170–179, T652, Z587, Z716, F150–159, T406, T436, T460, T463, F550, T430–435, F180–189, T520–529, T530–9, T590, T598, F190–199, F551, F553–6, F558, F559, N141–3, T387, T438–9, T501–3, T507, Z715, P042–4, Q860). Available at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol-other-drug-treatment-services/drug-related-hospitalisations/contents/content>.

c: AIHW definition, including secondary diagnoses:

Includes a principal or secondary diagnosis listed in Definition 2.

Drug and Alcohol related hospital admissions by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.7 times (20.0%/ 5.4%) more likely to have a drug and alcohol-related hospital admission compared to young people mostly in family based care.
- This pattern was mirrored for all definitions of drug and alcohol-related hospital admissions, and across all care type indicators.

Table 15: Drug and alcohol-related hospital admissions over a 24 months period following leaving care according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (DASSA, includes secondary)																		
No	651	94.6	108	80.0	759	92.2	595	95.7	273	85.3	868	92.1	599	95.7	262	85.1	861	92.2
Yes	37	5.4	27	20.0	64	7.8	27	4.3	47	14.7	74	7.9	27	4.3	46	14.9	73	7.8
At least one drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (AIHW, primary only)																		
No	661	96.1	116	85.9	777	94.4	603	96.9	287	89.7	890	94.5	607	97.0	275	89.3	882	94.4
Yes	27	3.9	19	14.1	46	5.6	19	3.1	33	10.3	52	5.5	19	3.0	33	10.7	52	5.6
At least one drug and alcohol related hospitalisation (AIHW, includes secondary)																		
No	650	94.5	105	77.8	755	91.7	594	95.5	269	84.1	863	91.6	598	95.5	258	83.8	856	91.6
Yes	38	5.5	30	22.2	68	8.3	28	4.5	51	15.9	79	8.4	28	4.5	50	16.2	78	8.4
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

Mental health-related hospital admissions

We used two definitions for mental health related admissions provided by AIHW (primary diagnosis only, and primary and secondary diagnoses).

Interpretation

- 11.6% of care leavers had at least one mental health related hospitalisation (AIHW, including secondary diagnoses)

Table 16: Drug and alcohol hospital related hospital admissions over a 24 months period following leaving care, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one mental health related hospitalisation (AIHW, primary only)^a		
No	891	92.0
Yes	78	8.0
At least one mental health related hospitalisation (AIHW, includes secondary)^b		
No	857	88.4
Yes	112	11.6
Total	969	100.0

a: AIHW definition, primary diagnosis only

Includes a principal diagnosis of:

- Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) 19 (Mental diseases and disorders) (F20-F52 (excluding F52.5), F54, F59-F69, F80-F84 (excluding F84.2), F88-F95, F98-F99 (excluding F98.5 and F98.6), G47.0, G47.1, G47.2, G47.8, G47.9, R44.0, R44.2, R44.3, R44.8, R45.0, R45.1, R45.4, R48.0, R48.1, R48.2, R48.8, Z03.2); or
- MDC 20 (Alcohol/drug use and alcohol/drug induced organic mental disorders) (F10-F19, F55)

b: AIHW definition, including secondary diagnosis

Includes any principal or secondary diagnosis listed in in Definition 1

Mental health-related hospital admissions by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care were 3.4 times (18.5%/ 5.4%) more likely to have a mental health related hospital admission compared to young people mostly in family based care.
- This pattern was similar when secondary diagnoses were included in the definition of mental health related hospitalisations, and across Indicators 2 and 3 for care type.

Table 17: Mental health hospital admissions over a 24 months period following leaving care according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one mental health related hospitalisation (AIHW, primary only)																		
No	651	94.6	110	81.5	761	92.5	592	95.2	277	86.6	869	92.3	596	95.2	266	86.4	862	92.3
Yes	37	5.4	25	18.5	62	7.5	30	4.8	43	13.4	73	7.7	30	4.8	42	13.6	72	7.7
At least one mental health related hospitalisation (AIHW, includes secondary)																		
No	633	92.0	100	74.1	733	89.1	578	92.9	257	80.3	835	88.6	582	93.0	247	80.2	829	88.8
Yes	55	8.0	35	25.9	90	10.9	44	7.1	63	19.7	107	11.4	44	7.0	61	19.8	105	11.2
Total	688	100	135	100	823	100	622	100	320	100	942	100	626	100	308	100	934	100

a: AIHW definition, primary diagnosis only

Includes a principal diagnosis of:

Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) 19 (Mental diseases and disorders) (F20-F52 (excluding F52.5), F54, F59-F69, F80-F84 (excluding F84.2), F88-F95, F98-F99 (excluding F98.5 and F98.6), G47.0, G47.1, G47.2, G47.8, G47.9, R44.0, R44.2, R44.3, R44.8, R45.0, R45.1, R45.4, R48.0, R48.1, R48.2, R48.8, Z03.2); or

- MDC 20 (Alcohol/drug use and alcohol/drug induced organic mental disorders) (F10-F19, F55)

b: AIHW definition, including secondary diagnosis: Includes any principal or secondary diagnosis listed in in Definition 1

Emergency department presentations

We observed Emergency Department (ED) presentations over a 2 year-period period following the end of last placement for care leavers who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016 (n=969).

This means we can observe ED presentations for every young person for 24 months.

Interpretation

- 51% of care leavers had at least one ED presentation over 24 months following the end of last placement.
- 17.5% of young people presented 4 or more times to ED during this period.
- By way of comparison, 9.0% of young people who were 17 years of age in 2012 had an ED presentation over a two-year period following their 17th birthday.
- While they are not directly comparable because the care leavers' cohort includes 17 to 20 year-olds, this gives some indication that presentation to ED in this population was substantially high.

Table 18: Emergency Department presentations over 24 months following end of last placement, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one ED presentation		
No	475	49.0
Yes	494	51.0
Number of ED presentations		
0	475	49.0
1	177	18.3
2 or 3	147	15.2
4 or more	170	17.5
Total	969	100.0

Emergency department presentations by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, 72.6% of the care leavers who were predominantly in non-family-based care had at least one ED presentation over a 24 months period following leaving care. This was 46.4% in care leavers mostly in family based care.
- The proportion of care leavers having 4 or more ED presentations was 2.8 times (36.3/13.1) higher among young people who were predominantly in non-family-based care.
- These estimates were similar across all care type indicators.

Table 19: Emergency department presentations over a 24 months period following leaving care according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one ED presentation																		
No	369	53.6	37	27.4	406	49.3	363	58.4	102	31.9	465	49.4	364	58.1	99	32.1	463	49.6
Yes	319	46.4	98	72.6	417	50.7	259	41.6	218	68.1	477	50.6	262	41.9	209	67.9	471	50.4
Number of ED presentations																		
0	369	53.6	37	27.4	406	49.3	363	58.4	102	31.9	465	49.4	364	58.1	99	32.1	463	49.6
1	130	18.9	22	16.3	152	18.5	111	17.8	60	18.8	171	18.2	112	17.9	59	19.2	171	18.3
2 or 3	99	14.4	27	20.0	126	15.3	85	13.7	59	18.4	144	15.3	86	13.7	56	18.2	142	15.2
4 or more	90	13.1	49	36.3	139	16.9	63	10.1	99	30.9	162	17.2	64	10.2	94	30.5	158	16.9
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

Drug and Alcohol related ED presentations

We used two definitions for drug and alcohol related ED presentations provided by DASSA and AIHW. The ED data only includes a primary diagnosis.

Interpretation

- 7.4% of care leavers had at least one ED presentation for drug and alcohol (AIHW definition).

Table 20: Drug and alcohol ED presentations over a 24 months period following leaving care, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one ED presentation for drug and alcohol (DASSA definition)^a		
No	914	94.3
Yes	55	5.7
At least one ED presentation for drug and alcohol (AIHW definition)^b		
No	897	92.6
Yes	72	7.4
Total	969	100.0

a: DASSA definition: Includes ED presentations for any ICD-10-AM codes across principal and secondary diagnoses related to:

- Mental or Behaviour Disorders due to use of alcohol and other specified drugs (F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19); *or*
- External causes related to
 - Assault by drugs, medicaments of biological substances (X85); *or* Accidental poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (X41, X42, X44); *or* Intentional self-harm from poisoning including suicide (X61, X62, X64); *or* Event of undetermined intent involving poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (Y11, Y12, Y14); *or*
- Poisoning by drugs (T40.0- T40.9, T42.3, T42.4, T42.6, T42.7, T43.3, T43.5, T43.6, T43.8, T43.9)

b: AIHW definition: Includes ED presentations for any ICD-10-AM codes across for diagnoses related to: (F170–179, T652, Z587, Z716, F150–159, T406, T436, T460, T463, F550, T430–435, F180–189, T520–529, T530–9, T590, T598, F190–199, F551, F553–6, F558, F559, N141–3, T387, T438–9, T501–3, T507, Z715, P042–4, Q860). Available at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol-other-drug-treatment-services/drug-related-hospitalisations/contents/content>.

Drug and Alcohol related ED presentations by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, Drug and alcohol related ED presentations (DASSA definition) were 3.5 times (13.3%/ 3.8%) higher among care leavers predominantly in non-family based care.
- This pattern was similar for Indicators 2 and 3.

Table 21: Drug and alcohol related ED presentations over a 24 months period following leaving care according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one drug and alcohol related ED presentation (DASSA)^a																		
No	662	96.2	117	86.7	779	94.7	607	97.6	283	88.4	890	94.5	610	97.4	270	87.7	880	94.2
Yes	26	3.8	18	13.3	44	5.3	15	2.4	37	11.6	52	5.5	16	2.6	38	12.3	54	5.8
At least one drug and alcohol related ED presentation (AIHW)^b																		
No	657	95.5	109	80.7	766	93.1	605	97.3	268	83.8	873	92.7	607	97.0	258	83.8	865	92.6
Yes	31	4.5	26	19.3	57	6.9	17	2.7	52	16.3	69	7.3	19	3.0	50	16.2	69	7.4
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

a: DASSA definition: Includes admissions to hospital for any ICD-10-AM codes across principal and secondary diagnoses related to:

- Mental or Behaviour Disorders due to use of alcohol and other specified drugs (F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19); or
- External causes related to Assault by drugs, medicaments of biological substances (X85); or Accidental poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (X41, X42, X44); or Intentional self-harm from poisoning including suicide (X61, X62, X64); or Event of undetermined intent involving poisoning by and exposure to specific drugs (Y11, Y12, Y14); or
- Poisoning by drugs (T40.0- T40.9, T42.3, T42.4, T42.6, T42.7, T43.3, T43.5, T43.6, T43.8, T43.9)

b: AIHW definition: Includes admissions to hospital for any ICD-10-AM codes across principal and secondary diagnoses related to: (F170–179, T652, Z587, Z716, F150–159, T406, T436, T460, T463, F550, T430–435, F180–189, T520–529, T530–9, T590, T598, F190–199, F551, F553–6, F558, F559, N141–3, T387, T438–9, T501–3, T507, Z715, P042–4, Q860). Available at

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol-other-drug-treatment-services/drug-related-hospitalisations/contents/content>.

Mental health-related ED presentations

Interpretation

- 13.6% of young people had at least one mental health-related ED presentation.

Table 22: Mental health related ED presentations over a 24 months period following leaving care, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	n	col%
At least one mental health related ED presentation (AIHW definition)^a		
No	837	86.4
Yes	132	13.6
Total	969	100.0

a Includes a diagnosis of:

- Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) 19 (Mental diseases and disorders) (F20-F52 (excluding F52.5), F54, F59-F69, F80-F84 (excluding F84.2), F88-F95, F98-F99 (excluding F98.5 and F98.6), G47.0, G47.1, G47.2, G47.8, G47.9, R44.0, R44.2, R44.3, R44.8, R45.0, R45.1, R45.4, R48.0, R48.1, R48.2, R48.8, Z03.2); *or*
- MDC 20 (Alcohol/drug use and alcohol/drug induced organic mental disorders) (F10-F19, F55)

Mental health-related ED presentations by care type

Interpretation

- For Indicator 1, mental health-related ED presentations were 3.2 times (29.6%/9.2%) higher among care leavers predominantly in non-family based care.
- Care leavers who had their last placement in a non-family based care type (Indicator 2) were 4.2 (26.6% /6.4%) times more likely to have a mental health-related ED presentation.

Table 23: Mental health-related ED presentations over a 24 months period following leaving care according to care type, Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2008/2009 to 2015/2016, n=969

	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%	n	col%
At least one ED mental health-related presentation (AIHW definition)^a																		
No	625	90.8	95	70.4	720	87.5	582	93.6	235	73.4	817	86.7	586	93.6	224	72.7	810	86.7
Yes	63	9.2	40	29.6	103	12.5	40	6.4	85	26.6	125	13.3	40	6.4	84	27.3	124	13.3
Total	688	100.0	135	100.0	823	100.0	622	100.0	320	100.0	942	100.0	626	100.0	308	100.0	934	100.0

^a Includes a diagnosis of:

- Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) 19 (Mental diseases and disorders) (F20-F52 (excluding F52.5), F54, F59-F69, F80-F84 (excluding F84.2), F88-F95, F98-F99 (excluding F98.5 and F98.6), G47.0, G47.1, G47.2, G47.8, G47.9, R44.0, R44.2, R44.3, R44.8, R45.0, R45.1, R45.4, R48.0, R48.1, R48.2, R48.8, Z03.2); or
- MDC 20 (Alcohol/drug use and alcohol/drug induced organic mental disorders) (F10-F19, F55)

Part 4. Commonwealth welfare outcomes

Table 24 shows welfare payments in the 2 years following final OOHC placement, including youth allowance, Newstart allowance, disability payment, or a parenting-related payment.

Interpretation

- 92.5% of care leavers received a welfare payment within 2 years of leaving care.
- 9.2% of care leavers received a parenting-related payment within 2 years of leaving care.

Table 24: Welfare payments within 2 years of leaving care, care leavers 2008/09 to 2013/2014

	n	%
Any welfare payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	53	7.5
Yes	652	92.5
Abstudy/Austudy payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	677	96.0
Yes	28	4.0
Youth allowance payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	207	29.4
Yes	498	70.6
Disability payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	556	78.9
Yes	149	21.1
Newstart payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	696	98.7
Yes	9	1.3
Parenting-related payment within 2 years of leaving care		
No	640	90.8
Yes	65	9.2
Total	705	100.0

Note:

Youth Allowance: Financial help for those aged 24 or younger and a student or Australian Apprentice, or 21 or younger and looking for work.

Newstart Allowance (Unemployment benefit): Financial assistance to people who are unemployed or treated as unemployed and, unless exempted from mutual obligation requirements are participating in or willing to participate in approved activities and/or job search, and are prepared to enter into, comply with or vary an existing Job Plan to fulfil the mutual obligation requirement.

Abstudy - Financial assistance for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students or apprentices.

Austudy - Financial help for those aged 25 or older and studying or an Australian Apprentice.

Parenting related payments included: Baby Bonus, Child Care Benefit, Dad and Partner Pay, Family Tax Benefit, Maternity Payment, Parental Leave Pay, Parenting Payment Partnered and Parenting Payment Single.

Disability Support Pension: Financial help if you have a permanent physical, intellectual or psychiatric condition that stops you from working.

Table 25 shows welfare payments in the 5 years following final OOHC placement, including youth allowance, Newstart allowance, disability payment, or a parenting-related payment.

Interpretation

- 94.9% of care leavers received a welfare payment within 5 years of leaving care.
- 49.2% of care leavers received Newstart payment within 5 years of leaving care.
- 18.8% of care leavers received a parenting-related payment within 5 years of leaving care.

Table 25: Welfare payments within 5 years of leaving care, care leavers 2008/09 to 2010/211

	n	%
Any welfare payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	16	5.1
Yes	297	94.9
Abstudy/Austudy payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	302	96.5
Yes	11	3.5
Youth allowance payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	89	28.4
Yes	224	71.6
Disability payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	233	74.4
Yes	80	25.6
Newstart payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	159	50.8
Yes	154	49.2
Parenting related payment within 5 years of leaving care		
No	254	81.2
Yes	59	18.8
Total	313	100.0

Note:

Youth Allowance: Financial help for those aged 24 or younger and a student or Australian Apprentice, or 21 or younger and looking for work.

Newstart Allowance (Unemployment benefit): Financial assistance to people who are unemployed or treated as unemployed and, unless exempted from mutual obligation requirements are participating in or willing to participate in approved activities and/or job search, and are prepared to enter into, comply with or vary an existing Job Plan to fulfil the mutual obligation requirement.

Abstudy - Financial assistance for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students or apprentices.

Austudy - Financial help for those aged 25 or older and studying or an Australian Apprentice.

Parenting related payments include: Parenting payment partnered, parenting payment single, parental leave payment maternity payment, baby bonus, childcare payment, dad and partner payment, family tax benefit.

Disability Support Pension: Financial help if you have a permanent physical, intellectual or psychiatric condition that stops you from working.

Appendix A

Table 26: Demographic characteristics, young people eligible for the Care Leavers cohort who left OOHC from 2008/2009 to 2018/2019, n=1,344

	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		Total	
	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %	n	col %
Gender																								
Male	44	55.0	73	65.8	69	56.6	79	58.5	73	64	77	53.8	81	56.3	60	50.0	64	54.2	64	47.1	66	54.5	750	55.8
Female	36	45.0	38	34.2	53	43.4	56	41.5	41	36	66	46.2	63	43.8	60	50.0	54	45.8	72	52.9	55	45.5	594	44.2
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander																								
Yes	18	22.5	22	19.8	21	17.2	22	16.3	23	20.2	32	22.4	35	24.3	35	29.2	31	26.3	41	30.1	41	33.9	321	23.9
No	62	77.5	89	80.2	101	82.8	113	83.7	91	79.8	111	77.6	109	75.7	85	70.8	87	73.7	95	69.9	80	66.1	1,023	76.1
Age at first placement (years)																								
<1	20	25.0	20	18.0	22	18	21	15.6	17	14.9	21	14.7	21	14.6	31	25.8	21	17.8	25	18.4	21	17.4	240	17.9
1-5	26	32.5	36	32.4	33	27	28	20.7	33	28.9	50	35	43	29.9	40	33.3	46	39.0	35	25.7	46	38.0	416	31.0
6-11	12	15.0	16	14.4	20	16.4	33	24.4	28	24.6	34	23.8	45	31.3	22	18.3	32	27.1	41	30.1	34	28.1	317	23.6
>11	22	27.5	39	35.1	47	38.5	53	39.3	36	31.6	38	26.6	35	24.3	27	22.5	19	16.1	35	25.7	20	16.5	371	27.6
Age at the end of last placement (years)																								
17	63	78.8	79	71.2	94	77.0	105	77.8	86	75.4	84	58.7	107	74.3	82	68.3	77	65.3	91	66.9	71	58.7	939	69.9
18/19/ 20	17	21.3	32	28.8	28	23.0	30	22.2	28	24.6	59	41.3	37	25.7	38	31.7	41	34.7	45	33.1	50	41.3	405	30.1
Total	80	100.0	111	100.0	122	100.0	135	100.0	114	100.0	143	100.0	144	100.0	120	100.0	118	100.0	136	100.0	121	100.0	1,344	100.0

Appendix B

Table 27: Care type among the eligible cohorts, young people eligible for the Care Leavers cohort who left care from 2016/2017 to 2018/2019, n=1,344

Year at the end of last placement	Indicator 1 Predominant type of care over the life course						Indicator 2 Type of care at last placement						Indicator 3 Predominant type of care over the last year					
	Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non- family based care		Total		Family based care		Non-family based care		Total		Mostly in family based care		Mostly in non-family based care		Total	
	n	row%	n	row%	n	col%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%	n	row%
2008/2009	50	86.2	8	13.8	58	100.0	44	57.1	33	42.9	77	100.0	45	59.2	31	40.8	76	100.0
2009/2010	77	92.8	6	7.2	83	100.0	75	72.1	29	27.9	104	100.0	76	73.1	28	26.9	104	100.0
2010/2011	77	85.6	13	14.4	90	100.0	84	75.7	27	24.3	111	100.0	84	76.4	26	23.6	110	100.0
2011/2012	98	87.5	14	12.5	112	100.0	94	72.9	35	27.1	129	100.0	95	74.2	33	25.8	128	100.0
2012/2013	86	82.7	18	17.3	104	100.0	76	66.7	38	33.3	114	100.0	77	70.0	33	30.0	110	100.0
2013/2014	106	84.8	19	15.2	125	100.0	98	68.5	45	31.5	143	100.0	96	67.1	47	32.9	143	100.0
2014/2015	105	78.4	29	21.6	134	100.0	79	54.9	65	45.1	144	100.0	80	55.6	64	44.4	144	100.0
2015/2016	89	76.1	28	23.9	117	100.0	72	60.0	48	40.0	120	100.0	73	61.3	46	38.7	119	100.0
2016/2017	94	81.0	22	19.0	116	100.0	76	64.4	42	35.6	118	100.0	76	64.4	42	35.6	118	100.0
2017/2018	102	77.9	29	22.1	131	100.0	72	52.9	64	47.1	136	100.0	74	54.4	62	45.6	136	100.0
2018/2019	94	79.7	24	20.3	118	100.0	59	48.8	62	51.2	121	100.0	62	51.2	59	48.8	121	100.0
Total	978	82.3	210	17.7	1,188	100.0	829	62.9	488	37.1	1,317	100.0	838	64.0	471	36.0	1,309	100.0