

# **Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

12 December 2011

### **New National Education and Care Services Ombudsman, Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner**

Commonwealth and State and Territory Ministers today announced the intention to appoint Dr Diane Sisely to the roles of National Education and Care Services Ombudsman, Freedom of Information Commissioner and Privacy Commissioner.

The decision to appoint Dr Sisely was agreed to by all Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers with responsibility for Early Childhood through the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs. The appointments will be made under the new Education and Care Services National Regulations, which form part of the National Quality Framework for early childhood education, coming into effect from 1 January 2012.

Dr Sisely is currently the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner.

“We are pleased to have a person as qualified and experienced as Dr Sisely to accept this important role. In doing so she will play a critical part in ensuring fairness and accountability in our democratic system of government,” said the Chair of the Ministerial Council, the Hon. Martin Dixon MP.

Dr Sisely will commence her new responsibilities on 1 January 2012 to coincide with the start of the National Quality Framework, which will apply to most long day care, family day care outside school hours care services and preschools across Australia.

“I am delighted to assume these roles in support of the National Quality Framework for childhood education and care. The introduction of the first national regulatory system for early childhood education and care is an important reform and I look forward to making a contribution,” Dr Sisely said.

Under the National Quality Framework, the approval and monitoring of education and care services for children and the quality assessment of such services become the responsibility of state and territory Regulatory Authorities.

A new national body, Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) has been established to guide the implementation of the National Quality Framework nationally. It will also award services demonstrating excellence and manage applications for further review of quality ratings.

The Office of the Ombudsman will be responsible for independently examining complaints and concerns about the administrative actions of ACECQA.

As Freedom of Information Commissioner, Dr Sisely will investigate complaints about the handling of freedom of information (FOI) requests and review FOI decisions by ACECQA and the state and territory Regulatory Authorities. As Privacy Commissioner, Dr Sisely will deal with privacy related complaints about ACECQA and state and territory Regulatory Authorities.

“It is important that there is an independent mechanism for concerns and issues to be dealt with,” said Dr Sisely.

**Contact: James Martin 0400 744 913**

**Attachments:** Dr Diane Sisely biographical information:

Dr Diane Sisely is currently the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner. She is also Director of the Australian Centre for Human Rights Education hosted by RMIT University. She is a Member of the Victorian Mental Health Review Board, a founding Board Member of the Human Rights Law Resource Centre and a Member of the Committee for Liberty Victoria. She is a former Co-Chair of Reconciliation Victoria. Dr Sisely lead the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria from 1994-2004 and previously chaired the Victorian Department of Human Services’ Human Research Ethics Committee. She has extensive knowledge and experience in working with all sectors of society to further respect for human rights.