



## Palmer Report – two years of progress – Case management

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) case management service was introduced in late 2005 in response to the Palmer Report. The new service facilitates the resolution of cases involving vulnerable people or those with very complex or sensitive circumstances.

DIAC case managers apply a tailored service delivery approach by:

- ensuring that each person's case is managed expeditiously towards a fair, reasonable and lawful immigration outcome
- brokering and coordinating necessary services according to people's individual circumstances, as documented in a case plan based on a comprehensive assessment of the client's needs.

The service has now been implemented in every state and territory. Each case management service individually assesses and manages people in detention. Case management is also provided to people in the community with particularly vulnerable, sensitive or complex circumstances, such as minors, the elderly, or people with a disability.

Case management is designed around early intervention – that is, working with clients as soon as possible to ensure they understand how the immigration system operates and what role they can play in resolving their own status. It ensures that they are treated as individuals, and that government policies are sensitively implemented.

By 7 May 2007, a total of 47 trained case managers were deployed across the DIAC's network (18 in New South Wales, nine in Victoria, six in National Office, five in Queensland, three each in South Australia and Western Australia and one each in Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory) and more than 830 clients were either being case-managed or assessed for case management. Of these, approximately 60 per cent were in some form of immigration detention and around 40 per cent were in the community.

The Community Care Pilot (CCP), launched in New South Wales and Victoria in 2006, provides related services through partnership with the Australian Red Cross and International Organization for Migration. The pilot achieved its client referral target of a minimum 200 clients in mid-February. About 400 clients are expected to be included in the programme by the end of June 2007.

The CCP has received an extra \$5.6 million in funding to enable its extension for a further 12 months and the pilot's expansion to Queensland.

A suite of systems, reference material and training has been provided to support case managers in their work. The first *Systems for People* release on 23 April 2007 included a case management and compliance portal. The portal will be used to record and monitor the progress of each client towards an immigration outcome and will further support DIAC staff by providing a 'single view' of the client. Online reference material, such as a case management handbook, has also been made available to case managers and other staff through the portal.

'Much has been achieved and the Detention Health Advisory Group has made a substantial contribution to the development by the department of new approaches to the provision of health care to immigration detainees, all in a context of very rapid change.'

Associate Professor Harry Minas, Chair of the Detention Health Advisory Group