

Statement of Penelope Church

Name: Penelope Church

Address: Level 9, 2 Wentworth Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

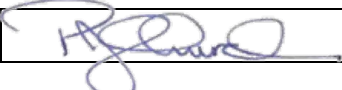
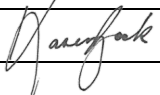
Occupation: Acting Director Intensive Support Services, NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Date: 10 December 2021

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Royal Commission). This statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. I make this statement based on my own knowledge and relying on information supplied by others.
3. I make this statement on behalf of NSW Department of Communities and Justice and I am authorised to do so.
4. This statement addresses the Sherwood Program.

Professional background

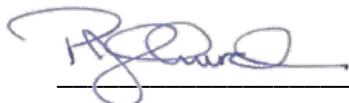
5. I am the Acting Director Intensive Support Services, of the Department of Communities of Justice. I have held this position since November 2021.
6. My current role requires me to lead the delivery of intensive support to children and young people in statutory out of home care in NSW. My substantive role in the Department of Communities of Justice is Director Commissioning and Planning in the Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and Northern Sydney District. I have held this position since January 2017. In my substantive role I lead the commissioning and contract management of the Department of Communities and Justice's funded programs that support children, young people, families, individuals and communities.

Signature		Witness	
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STATEMENT OF: Penelope Church**The Sherwood Program in NSW**

7. A significant body of research informs the Sherwood Program in NSW. The program draws from the ARC (Attachment, Regulation, and Competency) model, which recognises the neurobiological impacts of trauma. ARC is designed as both an individual level clinical intervention and as an organisational framework to support trauma-informed care. The Sherwood Program model is underpinned by the recognition that 'Complex trauma exposure results in a loss of core capacities for self-regulation and interpersonal relatedness. Children exposed to complex trauma often experience lifelong problems that place them at risk for additional trauma exposure and cumulative impairment' (Cook, Spinazzola, Ford et al, 2005).
8. The Sherwood Program provides a trauma recovery program for children and young people who have complex care needs which are beyond the capacity of the OOHC sector to meet.
9. Placement in the Sherwood Program recognises that the child or young person's challenging behaviours are of extreme risk to themselves, care staff, and community members. There is recognition that there is a very small group of children and young people who are not able to be kept safe in a community setting and these children and young people that may meet entry criteria for the Sherwood Program.
10. The Supreme Court of NSW is the decision maker as to who, under what circumstances and for what period of time, a child or young person is placed in the Sherwood Program.
11. The Sherwood Program has partnered with local Aboriginal agency Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation which provides Aboriginal Medical Services and cultural support to young people in the program.

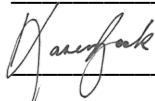
Signed:



Date:

13 December 2021

Witness:



Date:

13 December 2021