

# CCMS

## changing the way we operate

The government's new Child Care Management System (CCMS) has the potential to revolutionise how family day care schemes conduct their business. Pola Nadas reports.

CCMS is a national childcare computer system that will improve information on childcare supply and usage for families, services and the government. The system will bring all approved childcare services online to standardise and simplify the administration of Child Care Benefit (CCB) as services will provide information directly to DEEWR via the Internet to allow calculation and payment of CCB.

CCMS will be implemented progressively across childcare services from 1 July 2007 and expected to be finalised in family day care by July 2008.

To remain relevant into the future family day care schemes will need to stay abreast of CCMS technology coming onto the market. There is no doubt that this new software system has the potential to make our current structures and administrative processes obsolete, and to support new business practices.

For example, CCMS will support carers to work simultaneously for more than one family day care scheme without affecting each scheme's reporting requirements. Schemes will need to report a Carer ID against each session of care in an attendance record. Carer IDs must be unique within a scheme, so a carer working for two or more schemes would have a different Carer ID at each scheme.

Choosing, costing and planning for a particular CCMS solution for your service will require you to recognise and manage risks associated with the software, the CCMS transition process and the future capacity the product provides.

Each of the CCMS products offer similar functions but deliver it in different ways. These include managing your administration onsite or remotely, offering access to carers and/or parents and providing the ability to interface with other business or financial systems the service already has in place or wants

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to add, such as carer cashbooks, programming or QA.

The CCMS product you choose should

- return value to the person/s using it, including parents and carers if given access
- improve your service delivery; and
- reduce administration and bureaucratic duplication

The new range of CCMS software solutions supports different business structures.

- Most have broadened their software platforms to enable CCMS administration of multiple sites and different care types including family day care. Some CCMS

solutions do not include family day care on their platform.

- Others, such as Xpedite, target local government or larger mixed service providers with software solutions designed to interface with existing software products.
- Heartbeat4Kidz, Spike version 3, PC Pro, Future Blocks and Child Care Central were also designed to give them similar ability to interface with other software as well as support businesses managing a mix of service types.

When considering each of the software packages, the most important factors will be your business needs and the products best positioned to meet your expectations over the next three years, rather than any particular product.

Begin by visiting the FaHCSIA web list and use the information on the FDCA website to identify the CCMS software solutions that are most applicable to your circumstances. Consider and compare:

- their costs, particularly ongoing cost structures
- ease of integration into your current business procedures
- access to assistance to ensure minimal work disruption
- confidentiality and security of data
- ongoing costs of keeping your equipment and communication lines current



- switching costs if you move from one software provider to another particularly if the new software you have chosen has a flaw that cannot be rectified within two weeks and presents your organisation with significant problems. 🛠️

#### FaHCSIA web list:

[http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/childcare/ccms\\_regis\\_softwarelist.htm](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/childcare/ccms_regis_softwarelist.htm)

#### FDCA Website

[www.fdca.com.au/CCMS.html](http://www.fdca.com.au/CCMS.html)

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## CCMS and carers

CCMS is a computer management system through which CCB will be managed. It is a requirement that CCMS will be progressively implemented in all schemes from January 2008. All approved childcare services are expected to be using the new system by July 2009.

CCMS will have some impact on carers, but they will not be required to buy a computer to be part of the new system.

- if carers currently use a software program to calculate fees, they can continue to do so
- carers will still need to issue receipts to families when payment is received
- the frequency that schemes submit information to DEEWR has

changed. Carers will need to send their time sheets to the scheme office as quickly as possible to ensure that the scheme can lodge their childcare attendance records within two weeks after the end of the week in which the care was provided to avoid any delays in the payment of CCB.

DEEWR has included an information brochure for family day care services in this issue of JIGSAW.

More information, including an online version of the family day care services brochure, a brochure for in-home care services and one for parents, as well as a frequently asked questions sheet can be found at <http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/childcare/ccms.htm>

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