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| Flexible Funding – Better Futures  31292 |
| Outcome objective: Victorians are safe and secure  Output group: Child protection and family services  Output: Family and community services |

# 1. Service objective

Flexible Funding – Better Futures supports young people to achieve their goals that directly relate to their transition from care, including goals in relation to housing, education, employment, health and wellbeing and community connections.

# 2. Description of the service

Better Futures, a new way of supporting young people leaving care, rolled out across Victoria in November 2019.

Young people in kinship, foster and residential care and on the relevant orders are referred to Better Futures by their Child Protection Case Manager (DHHS or contracted) at 15 years and 9 months of age, allowing for earlier and more comprehensive transition planning, preparing young people for a successful transition to adulthood.

The Better Futures model includes case work support and access to flexible funding to support the achievement of goals for independence. Better Futures workers work with young people (and/or care teams while a young person is in-care) to identify goals across five service offers:

* Housing and Living Skills
* Health and Wellbeing
* Education
* Employment
* Community Connections

Flexible Funding (Better Futures) – Packages - supports young people to achieve their goals that directly relate to their transition from care, including goals in relation to housing, education, employment, health and wellbeing and community connections. Flexible funding should only be used to support goals included in a young person’s 15+ Care and Transition Plan, or Better Futures Support Plan.

Flexible Funding (Home Stretch) – Packages - supports young people to achieve their goals that directly relate to their transition from care, including goals in relation to housing, education, employment, health and wellbeing and community connections. Flexible funding should only be used to support goals included in a young person’s 15+ Care and Transition Plan, or Better Futures Support Plan.

Flexible Funding (Home Stretch) – Packages - Accommodation Allowance is a contribution towards the day-to-day costs of housing, including rent, utilities, telephone and internet. Other costs that have a direct positive impact on a young person’s ability to maintain stable housing, including costs to support engagement or re-engagement with education, training and employment, may also be funded via the allowance.

The allowance is brokered by Better Futures providers and must be in accordance with an agreed and approved Home Stretch Independent Accommodation Proposal. Costs are paid on invoice.

Flexible Funding – Better Futures should not replace or duplicate existing funding sources, including Client Expenses (31302) or the Commonwealth’s Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA).

# 3. Client group

The target group for Flexible Funding - Better Futures is young people leaving care/post care aged 15 years and 9 months to 21 years.

To be eligible for Better Futures support, a young person must be in/have been in kinship care, foster care or residential care on or after their 16th birthday and on one of the following orders

* Care by Secretary Order
* Long-Term Care Order
* Family Reunification Order

To be eligible for Home Stretch, young people will need to be engaged with (or demonstrate a willingness to engage) with their Better Futures worker and work towards goals for independence.

# 4. Obligations specific to this activity

In addition to the obligations listed in the Service Agreement, organisations funded to deliver this activity must comply with the following:

## 4a. Registration and Accreditation

* Independent review and accreditation against the department’s Human Services Standards, unless exempted
* Registration under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

## 4b. Program requirements and other policy guidelines

* [Better Futures Operational Guidelines](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care-planning)

<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care>

* [Better Futures (Advantaged Thinking) Practice Framework](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care)

<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care>

* [Leaving Care information – Department of Health and Human Services](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care)

<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/leaving-care>

* [Child Protection Practice Manual – Leaving Care](https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/policies-and-procedures/out-home-care/leaving-care)

<https://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/policies-and-procedures/out-home-care/leaving-care>

* [Care and Transition Planning for Young People Leaving Care Framework](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/201706/care-and-transition-planning-for-leaving-care-framework-1212_PDF.pdf)

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/201706/care-and-transition-planning-for-leaving-care-framework-1212\_PDF.pdf>

# 5. Performance

Funding is subject to achieving the performance targets specified in Schedule 2 of the Service Agreement. Performance is measured as follows:

## Key performance measure 1: Amount of Flexible Funding expended in the reporting period – Better Futures or Home Stretch

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| Aim/objective | This performance measure is the amount of Better Futures or Home Stretch Flexible Funding expended in the reporting period. |
| Target | The performance measure target is provided in the Service Agreement. |
| Type of count | Cumulative  Non-cumulative |
| Counting rule | Count the total Better Futures or Home Stretch flexible funding expended in the reporting period.  The total yearly Flexible Funding allocation is divided by 12 to translate to indicative monthly expenditure. |
| Data source(s) collection | Service Delivery Tracking System (via the Funded Agency Channel) |
| Definition of terms | ‘Expended’ refers to funds spent and not funds approved for spending. |

## Key performance measure 2: Amount of Flexible Funding expended – Home Stretch – Independent Accommodation Allowance.

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| Aim/objective | This performance measure is the amount of Home Stretch Flexible Funding Independent Accommodation Allowance expended in the reporting period. |
| Target | The performance measure target is provided in the Service Agreement. |
| Type of count | Cumulative  Non-cumulative |
| Counting rule | Count the total Home Stretch Flexible Funding Independent Accommodation Allowance expended in the reporting period.  The total yearly Flexible Funding allocation is divided by 12 to translate to indicative monthly expenditure. |
| Data source(s) collection | Service Delivery Tracking System (via the Funded Agency Channel) |
| Definition of terms | ‘Expended’ refers to funds spent and not funds approved for spending. |

## Performance measure 3: Number of Flexible Funding packages – Better Futures or Home Stretch

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| Aim/objective | This performance measure provides information about the total number of Better Futures or Home Stretch Flexible Funding packages provided, and the type of expenditure. |
| Target | The performance measure target is provided in the Service Agreement. |
| Type of count | Cumulative  Non-cumulative |
| Counting rule | Count the number of packages during the reporting period and the type of expenditure. |
| Data source(s) collection | CRISSP |
| Definition of terms | ‘Packages’ refers to an instance of Better Futures or Home Stretch Flexible Funding expenditure.  For example, one package may be an instance of funding a telephone for a young person or one package may be funding for a bed, a fridge, and a washing machine for a young person.  ‘Type of expenditure’ refers to an itemised list of expenditure (such as purchase of travel tickets, a lap top, or housing set up including whitegoods). |

## Performance measure 4: Number of Flexible Funding packages – Home Stretch – Independent Accommodation Allowance

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| Aim/objective | This performance measure provides information about the total number of Flexible Funding packages – Home Stretch Independent Accommodation Allowance provided and the type of expenditure. |
| Target | The performance measure target is provided in the Service Agreement. |
| Type of count | Cumulative  Non-cumulative |
| Counting rule | Count the number of packages during the reporting period and the type of expenditure. |
| Data source(s) collection | CRISSP |
| Definition of terms | Packages’ refers to an instance of Home stretch Independent Accommodation Allowance expenditure.  For example, one package may be a ‘recurring’ instance of rental subsidy (this would be reported each month).  ‘Type of expenditure’ refers to an itemised list of expenditure (such as rental subsidy, utilities contribution). |

# 6. Data collection

The reporting requirements for this service are:

| Data collection name | Data system | Data set | Reporting cycle |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Service Delivery Tracking | Funded Agency Channel / SAMS2 | Funded Agency Channel / SAMS2 | Monthly |
| Better Futures Flexible Funding acquittal | CRISSP | Monthly | Bi-annually to local advisor |
| Home Stretch Flexible Funding acquittal | CRISSP | Monthly | Bi-annually to local advisor |

# 7. Activity mapping

| NEW activity | NEW sub activity | OLD activity | OLD sub activity |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 31292 - Flexible Funding - Better Futures | Better Futures Flexible Funding - Packages | 31414 - Leaving Care Support Services, 31421 - Springboard (Leaving Care) | Brokerage Better Futures: Brokerage (Low, Medium, High) |
| Home Stretch Flexible Funding - Packages | 31414 - Leaving Care Support Services | Better Futures - Home Stretch - Flexible Funding |
| Home Stretch Accommodation allowance - Packages | 31414 - Leaving Care Support Services | Better Futures - Home Stretch - Accommodation |

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