

19 August 2025

In 2014, in an absence of any housing for children and young people in out of home care being provided by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), the Housing Initiative was established as an innovative solution in response to a critical lack of housing for those in our care.

This involved properties owned by Allambi Care staff being leased as housing for children and young people, with the awareness of the DCJ Permanency Support Program (PSP). The houses in question represented just over 10% of the total leased housing that Allambi Care provides for our clients.

The Initiative enabled us to deliver long term safe and secure housing. It also provided savings for the Government by reducing the movement in and out of the general rental market by children and young people in our care. This also worked to provide the children in our care with long term, stable and secure housing.

No houses were owned by the voluntary members of the Board, and the Initiative was available to all staff, not just senior staff as reported.

Since commencement of the Allambi Care Housing Initiative in 2014, all required Related Party transactions for the Initiative were disclosed. Whilst the Initiative was in operation these financial statements were transparently provided to the DCJ, as part of Allambi Care's compliance with its Funding Deed.

A recent external audit made observations about sector wide policy gaps and identified a single issue related to inadvertent incorrect journalling of costs. That issue was immediately rectified. Importantly, the review raised no concerns about the treatment, safety or welfare of children and young people in our care, which remains our absolute priority.

We disagree with many of the tabled findings of the audit and strongly reject any suggestion that Allambi Care employees acted inappropriately or that there has been any misuse of public funds and that children and young people have been in any way disadvantaged. We welcome the DCJ's work in providing new policy guidance in a range of areas that were the focus of the audit. This provides clarity of expectations to our organisation and the wider sector.

As soon as Allambi Care was advised that the DCJ had concerns regarding the Housing Initiative, Allambi Care took steps to cease the Initiative. Allambi remains extremely concerned about the lack of appropriate safe and secure housing available for children to ensure they are not placed in emergency accommodation. We welcome any steps from the Government to solve this ongoing challenge.

Recent reports have claimed inappropriate use of funds to purchase bean bags and scanning services. Allambi Care purchased therapeutic sensory pods for each child, provided to them as they entered our care. They are owned by the child and move with them as they progress out of care. Funds spent on scanning were in response to a request by the DCJ Records Management team to provide copies of archived client files and involved hundreds of thousands of scanned pages. Additionally, the scanning of documents saved the government money that was otherwise being spend in storage costs.

Bulk purchasing of goods for children and young people, such as mattresses, is common practice across the sector for the savings it returns and the capacity to rapidly set up residences as required. All items purchased are tracked and appropriately allocated. The DCJ has only recently provided policy guidance on this practice.

The \$4.1million of allegedly “unaccounted” funds referred to in recent media coverage relates to properties purchased by Allambi Care for the use of vulnerable people including children, young people, families and adults. It is not related to the housing Initiative and was not funded by the DCJ Permanency Support Program.

With the welfare of the children and young people in our care at the core of what we do, Allambi Care is committed to working closely with the DCJ and other stakeholders to ensure the system is fit for purpose, meets the needs of those it is designed to care for, and is transparent regarding the allocation of funding against service delivery.

Allambi Care is proud of its high quality and innovative work in this complex area of out of home care. With our committed staff we are consistently striving to strengthen and improve our service to achieve great results for children and young people in our care.