



**OPEN HOME
FOUNDATION**
TE WHARE KAUPAPA ĀWHINA

22nd December 2021

Minister for Children
Private Bag 18041
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

National Office
PO Box 31036
Lower Hutt 5040

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Dear Minister Davis,

Thank you for your letter dated 10th December 2021 regarding the report from the Independent Children's Monitor (ICM) and for the opportunity to respond. We also wish to thank you for your positive acknowledgement of the work that our team has done to date to comply with the National Care Standards (NCS) and Related Matters.

We have much work still to do - we have an ambitious work plan of continuous improvement with the aim of being able to show compliance across all of the NCS and Related Matters increasingly over time. We aim to do this by:-

- Continuing to hold fortnightly Care Standard Forums throughout OHF to upskill our social workers on the importance of and requirements of the National Care Standards.
- Continuing to develop our Case Management System (OSCAR) to enable greater scope and ease of reporting.
- Continuing to develop Better Off Survey data (used by Tamariki/whānau/parents and professionals experiencing OHF services).
- The formation of an internal Practice Alignment Group charged with systematically reviewing practice within OHF and gap analysis remedial action.
- Utilizing Mind of My Own statement results (tool to amplify the voices and experiences of Tamariki and young people in OHF care).

A significant barrier impacting our continuous improvement ability (systems development and then the ongoing maintenance thereof) is both financial and people resource. Justifiably, we have observed numerous dedicated new roles at Oranga Tamariki as they seek to comply with the NCS and Related Matters. As an approved s.396 organization OHF (as will other Iwi/Maori/NGO's) providing statutory care has the same need for dedicated specialist roles in order to build robust self – monitoring continuous improvement systems.

This barrier becomes even more critical to overcome for NGO's particularly in light of the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System and Children and Young People's Commission Bill which is currently before the House of Representatives as, this new legislation will significantly widen the scope and brief of the ICM's monitoring brief and therefore compliance of monitored agencies.

We have raised this barrier with the ICM and also Oranga Tamariki officials – we look forward to constructive dialogue in 2022.

Minister, thank you once again for your positive comments made about the Open Home Foundation's compliance to the National Care Standards and Related Matters – we look forward to being able to show further evidence of OHF's compliance as we seek to ensure that all children and young people in OHF care are safe and doing well.

May you and your whānau have a blessed and safe Christmas and New Year break.

Nga mihi nui.

Yours sincerely,



Don Irwin
Chief Executive



Michael Duncan
Board Chair