

FDC PROVIDERS COMMUNICATION PLAN

Direct Gap Fee Collection

[EXAMPLE ONLY]

Please note: This completed sample version shows how a family day care service might plan and deliver communications during their transition to the Direct Gap Fee Collection (DGFC) model. It illustrates how the communications plan template can be used to map key messages, audiences, channels, and timing across the transition period.

This is a fictional example provided for illustrative purposes only. Services should adapt and tailor their own plan based on their local context and requirements. Services should adapt and tailor their communications approach to suit their local context, educator and family needs, and preferred methods of engagement.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **DGFC – Direct Gap Fee Collection:** A payment model where families pay the gap fee (the portion not covered by CCS) directly to the family day care service.
- **CCS – Child Care Subsidy:** A government subsidy that helps eligible families with the cost of early childhood education.
- **CWA – Complying Written Arrangement:** A formal agreement between the service and family about care details and fees.
- **Gap Fee** – The out-of-pocket amount a family pays after the CCS has been applied.
- **FDCA – Family Day Care Australia:** The national peak body representing family day care sector.
- **DGFC Transition Start Date** – The date the service begins operating under the DGFC model. *Note: While this plan uses a go-live date of 1 October 2025 for planning purposes, all services must transition by 1 January 2026.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Australian Government requires all family day care services to transition to the Direct Gap Fee Collection (DGFC) model by 1 January 2026. This change ensures that families pay the “gap fee” - the portion not covered by the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) - directly to their approved service, not individual educators. This plan outlines the communications our service will deliver to educators, families and staff to ensure a smooth and informed transition.

2. OBJECTIVES

Communication Objectives

Effective communication will play a vital role in the success of the DGFC transition. Our communication strategy focuses on clarity, consistency, and support for all stakeholders, especially educators and families.

1. Raise awareness

- Inform educators, families, and internal staff about the upcoming changes, the reasons behind them, and the expected benefits to the sector.
- Ensure all audiences know that the change is legally mandated and sector wide.

2. Build understanding

- Provide clear explanations of what will change and when, including payment processes, system changes, and the roles of educators and families.
- Tailor messaging to the needs of different audiences to reduce confusion or misinformation.

3. Encourage early engagement

- Encourage families to update payment information and understand invoicing processes well before the transition deadline.
- Drive early adoption of software upgrades and new processes to ensure a smoother rollout.

4. Foster confidence in the transition

- Reassure families and educators that support is available and that the service has a structured, well-considered plan in place.
- Highlight the benefits of the new model - including transparency, reduced educator admin burden, and sector integrity.

5. Drive consistency of messaging

- Ensure that all staff and educators are using the same language and messages when talking to families.
- Promote the use of FDCA-provided resources, such as fact sheets, FAQs, and templates, to maintain sector alignment.

6. Promote two-way communication

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- Establish clear channels for questions and concerns from families and educators.
- Use feedback loops to identify misunderstandings or issues early and adapt messaging accordingly.

7. Evaluate and improve communications

- Monitor engagement levels (e.g. attendance at info sessions).
- Use feedback and queries to assess communication gaps and adjust tactics as needed.

3. KEY AUDIENCES + KEY MESSAGES

Key Audiences

Audience	Needs
Educators	Understand changes, what actions they must take, and how to support families.
Families	Know how and when to begin paying the gap fee to the service directly.
Coordinators/Managers	Clear guidance for supporting educators and families, and oversight of implementation.

Key Messages

Educators

- You will no longer collect gap fees from families. All payments will go directly to the service from 1 October 2025.
- This change reduces your admin load and allows you to focus on delivering quality education and care.
- You play a vital role in supporting families through the transition by helping them understand the new process.
- You will be provided with training, FAQs, and scripts so you can confidently explain the change.
- We are here to support you - if you receive questions you are unsure about, direct families to the service.

Families

- From 1 October 2025, you will pay your gap fee directly to the service - not to your educator.
- This change is required by law and is about improving transparency and security in how childcare fees are managed.
- Your CCS entitlements won't change, and you will continue receiving regular statements and invoices.
- The service will offer you multiple payment options and let you know how to get help if you are experiencing financial hardship.
- It's important to keep your payment details up to date and contact us with any questions early.

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Coordinators / Managers / Internal Staff

- Your role is central to ensuring educators and families feel supported and confident throughout the transition.
- Use consistent messaging across all communications and refer to the communications plan to align timing and tone.
- Help identify common questions or concerns from families and educators and share them so we can improve our resources.
- Ensure educators are equipped with updated policies, tools, and training well before go-live.
- Stay connected to the broader implementation team to ensure smooth alignment between communications and operational rollout.

4. KEY CHANNELS

Main communication channels

Channel	Who is responsible	Cadence
Email updates	Program Manager	Fortnightly
Educator Info Sessions	Coordinator	Monthly
Family Newsletters	Communications Officer	Monthly
SMS Reminders	Administration Officer	As needed
Posters at venues	Team Leaders	One-off
Website updates	Administration Support	At each milestone

5. COMMUNICATION PLANNING TOOLS AND TRACKER

Communications Activities Tracker

Message	Channel(s)	Audience	Time Frame	Responsible Person	Notes	Status Updates
Intro to DGFC & why it's happening	Email + Info Sheet	Families	July 2025	Program Manager	Use FDCA Fact Sheet	
Responses to key FAQs	Scripts	Families and Educators	Ongoing	Program Manager	Review of FAQs spreadsheet tracker to develop common scripts and templates for use.	
Family info night (online) - Share details of updated policies and procedures	Zoom + SMS invite	Families	29 August	Coordinator	Send SMS reminders 1 week prior	
Educator training on DGFC model Share details of updated policies and procedures	Online session	Educators	Throughout September	Coordinator	Include software provider Q&A	
First notice of bank details update instructions and invoicing details	Email + Website	Families	1 September	Coordinator	Provide contact for questions/support	
Second notice of bank details update and invoicing details	Email + Website	Families	15 September	Coordinator	Provide contact for questions/support	
Final notice of bank details update and invoicing details	Email + Website	Families	22 September	Coordinator	Provide contact for questions/support	
Go-Live Announcement: "We've switched to DGFC!"	Email + SMS reminder	Families	1 October 2025	Coordinator	Confirm that families now pay the service directly. Include helpdesk contact and thank families for transitioning.	
Gathering feedback from families and educators	Conduct a short survey via survey monkey	Educators and Families	13 October	Coordinator	Seek feedback using the evaluation questions in section 5 of our business implementation plan.	
Summary of DGFC transition feedback: "What we heard"	Email + Newsletter + Website	Families and Educators	25 October 2025	Coordinator	Share key insights from survey (e.g. what went well, what we'll improve). Reinforces transparency and trust. Include "thank you" for participation.	
Ongoing support	Email and direct contact	Families and Educators	Ongoing	All staff	Ongoing support to answer any questions/receive feedback and implement improvements as needed.	

Managing questions and feedback

This section outlines how we will manage questions and feedback for the transition.

Topic	Contact Person	Response Method	Notes
Payment concerns	Coordinator/Finance lead	Phone & email	Escalate hardship cases to Program Manager
FAQs	Coordinator	Weekly check-ins, tracked via excel spreadsheet to capture FAQs and evaluate if the questions are changing/becoming less	Provide Script and Fact Sheet
Software issues	Coordinator	Refer to third party software provider	Log recurring issues for future improvements

6. EVALUATION

We will measure the success of our communications through the following:

Objective	Success Indicator	How to Measure
Raise awareness of DGFC	Families and educators know what DGFC is	Pre- and post-session surveys
Build confidence in the process	Positive engagement during info sessions	Feedback forms + number of Q&A submissions
Ensure message consistency	Staff use standard messaging	Spot checks of comms + feedback from staff
Bank details are submitted	Details are submitted before the transition on 1 October	Completion of bank details in the system