

Long daycare providers to share in Abbott Government's \$200 million investment in professional development ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Almost half of all eligible long day care services have already applied to share in the Abbott Government's \$200 million investment in professional development.

Assistant Minister for Education Sussan Ley said in less than two weeks, over 2850 services had applied for the Government's Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDCPDP) - the largest investment of its kind.

She said it was a fantastic response from the sector and demonstrated the inequities of Labor's Early Years Quality Fund, which the Government's LDCPDP replaced.

"Labor's fund was a cruel hoax on child care educators," Ms Ley said.

"It was 'first-in, first-served'; services needed a unionised enterprise bargaining agreement to be eligible; and they only received two days' notice to lodge an extensive application for funding that expired after just two years.

"Then you've got the fact that funding ran out in 13 hours, but Labor kept mum and allowed services to continue applying and signing agreements with the union for three months.

"The result - the number of unionised enterprise bargaining agreements in the long day sector quadrupled, yet two-in-three services could never have received a dollar.

"When you look back on it, you wonder how Labor thought they were going to get away with such a blatant and brazen union membership drive on the public purse.

"The Abbott Government's decision to intervene will see the remaining funds shared fairly and equitably with all long day care services. No union card required."

The LDCPDP will use remaining funds from Labor's controversial EYQF, which was shut down after being found by an independent report to be a vehicle for union recruitment. The EYQF is currently under examination by the Auditor General.

Ms Ley said about 6000 long day care services were eligible for the LDCPDP, with applications closing 5pm (AEST) Friday 13 June 2014.

Ms Ley said the Abbott Government's decision to share funding equitably amongst services meant there was no need to use Labor's controversial 'first-in, first-served' model, making the application process fairer and simpler. Services do not require an enterprise bargaining agreement to access the LDCPDP, she said.

"This flood of applications also reflects the sector's support for these funds being used to deliver long-term benefits for the quality of education and care for our kids."

Ms Ley said services would be able to claim up to \$10,450 per full-time equivalent educator, with a base of \$3750 per FTE and additional loadings for early childhood teachers (\$2300), and regional (\$4100) and very remote educators (\$4400).

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