

Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study: Outcomes of Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care

Guidelines for Accessing the Data and Publication



Billy Black



Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study: Outcomes of Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care in NSW

Technical Report No.14
Guidelines for Accessing the Data and Publication

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Prepared by

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Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study Clearinghouse

All study publications including research reports, technical reports and evidence to action notes can be found on the study webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care

Study design by NSW Department of Communities and Justice (Insights, Analysis and Research); Australian Institute of Family Studies; Professor Judy Cashmore, University of Sydney; Professor Paul Delfabbro, University of Adelaide; Professor Ilan Katz, University of NSW; Dr Fred Wulczyn, Chapin Hall Center for Children University of Chicago.

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Acknowledgements We wish to extend our thanks to all the children, young people and caregivers who participated in interviews; childcare teachers, school teachers and caseworkers who participated in on-line surveys; and the data custodians in the relevant NSW and Commonwealth government departments. Ms Sammy Verma grew up in care and played a key role in the production of the study video for children and stakeholders. Ms Billy Black also grew up in care and designed the study artwork. Ms Sammy Verma and Mr Samuel Eyeson-Annan both did the voiceover for the audio computer-assisted self-interview (ACASI) for the child/young person interview.

Ethics approval by The University of NSW Human Research Ethics Committee (approval number HC10335 & HC16542); Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW Ethics Committee (approval number 766/10); NSW Department of Education and Communities State Education Research Approval Process (SERAP, approval number 2012250); NSW Population & Health Services Research Ethics Committee (Ref: HREC/14/CIPHS/74 Cancer Institute NSW: 2014/12/570).



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Preface

The Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study (POCLS) is funded and managed by the New South Wales Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). It is the first large-scale prospective longitudinal study of children and young people in out-of-home care (OOHC) in Australia. Information on safety, permanency and wellbeing is being collected from various sources. The child developmental domains of interest are physical health, socio-emotional wellbeing and cognitive/learning ability.

The overall aim of this study is to collect detailed information about the life course development of children who enter OOHC for the first time and the factors that influence their development. The POCLS objectives are to:

- Describe the characteristics, child protection history, development and wellbeing of children and young people at the time they enter OOHC for the first time
- Describe the services, interventions and pathways for children and young people in OOHC, post restoration, post adoption and on leaving care at 18 years
- Describe children's and young people's experiences while growing up in OOHC, post restoration, post adoption and on leaving care at 18 years
- Understand the factors that influence the outcomes for children and young people who grow up in OOHC, are restored home, are adopted or leave care at 18 years
- Inform policy and practice to strengthen the OOHC service system in NSW to improve the outcomes for children and young people in OOHC.

The POCLS is the first study to link data on children's child protection backgrounds, OOHC placements, health, education and offending held by multiple government agencies; and match it to first-hand accounts from children, caregivers, caseworkers and teachers. The POCLS database will allow researchers to track children's trajectories and experiences from birth.

The population cohort is a census of all children and young people who entered OOHC over an 18 month period for the first time in NSW between May 2010 and October 2011 (n=4,126). A subset of those children and young people who went on to receive final Children's Court care and protection orders by April 2013 (2,828) were eligible to participate in the study. For more information about the study please visit the study webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care.

The POCLS acknowledges and honours Aboriginal people as our First Peoples of NSW and is committed to working with the DCJ Aboriginal Outcomes team to ensure that Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities are supported and empowered to improve their life outcomes. The POCLS data asset will be used to

improve how services and supports are designed and delivered in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities.

The DCJ recognises the importance of Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance (IDS and IDG) in the design, collection, analysis, dissemination and management of all data related to Aboriginal Australians. The POCLS is subject to ethics approval, including from the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW. The DCJ is currently in the process of scoping the development of IDS and IDG principles that will apply to future Aboriginal data creation, development, stewardship, analysis, dissemination and infrastructure. The POCLS will continue to collaborate with Aboriginal Peoples and will apply the DCJ research governance principles once developed.

1 Purpose of the guidelines

The Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study (POCLS) provides a strong evidence base to inform policy, practice and professional development, to improve decision making and support for children and young people who have experienced out-of-home care (OOHC). The POCLS provides unique, high-quality information about the wellbeing trajectories of children aged 0-17 years in OOHC in NSW. Wave 1 provides a baseline indication of children's socio-emotional wellbeing, cognitive/learning ability, safety and physical health. The POCLS data asset allows for comparisons of cohorts of children for example those on interim care and protection orders only, on long-term final care and protection orders, and those who have exited final care and protection orders to restoration, guardianship or adoption. Findings from the POCLS have the potential to inform changes in policy and practice regarding working with children in OOHC, improve investment decisions and improve the long-term outcomes of children.

The POCLS survey and linked services data forms a significant data resource for studies whose aims are consistent with the aims of the POCLS data asset. These guidelines cover how researchers with their own research grants or undertaking commissioned research apply to access the POCLS data in SURE and publish the results. These guideline should be read in-conjunction with the POCLS Technical Report No. 1: Objectives and Strategic Research Agenda 2019-2020 which includes a list of data user resources and technical reports. The POCLS publications and data user resources are available on the POCLS webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/pocls-publication

The POCLS data are stored securely in the Secure Unified Research Environment (SURE) managed by the Sax Institute www.saxinstitute.org.au/our-work/sure/

Ethical approval for the POCLS was provided by the University of NSW Research Ethics Committee (HC10335 & HC16542) and NSW Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council Ethics Committee (No. 766/10). Ethical approval for NSW linked services data was provided by NSW Population and Health Services Research Ethic Committee (HREC/14/CIPHS/74; Cancer Institute NSW: 2014/12/570). Approval for the teacher survey was obtained from State Education Research Applications Process (No. 2012260). Consultation with the Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat (AbSec) was conducted as the peak body for Aboriginal OOHC and CREATE Foundation as the peak body for children and young people in OOHC.

Access to the POCLS data will:

- Improve the outcomes for children in OOHC and their families by expanding the evidence to inform policy and practice and strengthen the OOHC service system

-
- Encourage researchers to use the POCLS survey and linked services data in policy relevant research to underpin evidence based policy and practice change
 - Develop a critical mass of researchers with expertise in using the POCLS data
 - Invest in building career researchers in OOHC.

These Guidelines will ensure that:

- All external research requests for the POCLS data are assessed using a standard process
- All researchers have equity of access to the process and understand what is required of them to gain access to the POCLS data and to publish results
- Proposed research is delivered by credible post graduate students and research partners that can demonstrate clear benefits to DCJ clients and how their research links to key objectives in the DCJ Strategic Plan 2017-2021
www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about_us/publications
- The quality of research can be maintained and thus the outcomes of the research will be reliable and timely to inform DCJ strategic planning and policy development
- Research findings and knowledge translation go hand-in-hand.

2 Scope of the POCLS data asset

The POCLS data asset (Figure 1) consists of multiple data sources.

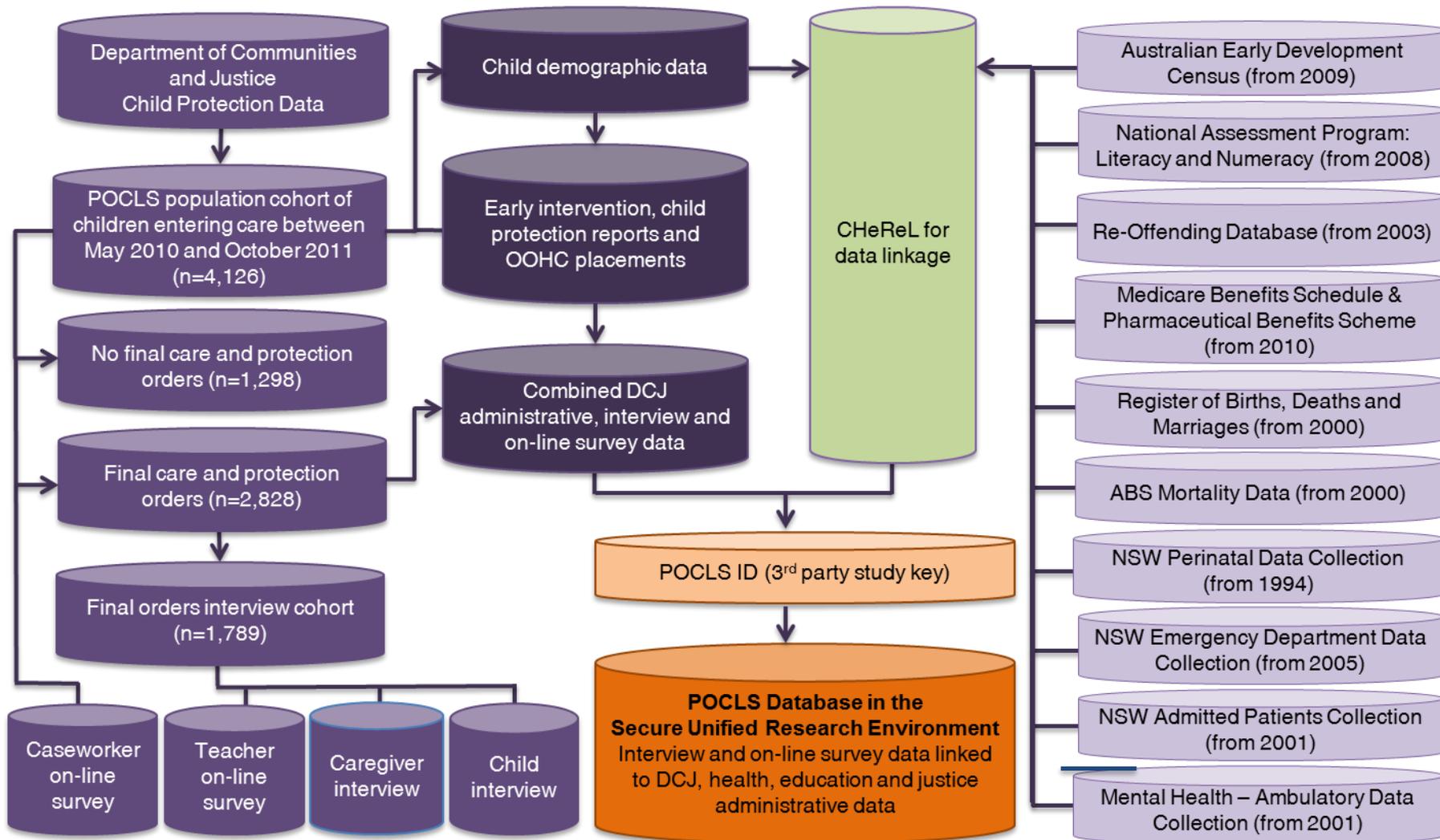
Survey data: The POCLS surveys of children, caregivers, parents, caseworkers and teachers make use of standardised tools and validated measures where available. Data items collected from participants include:

- Birth Parent Characteristics: demographics, number of children, physical health, risk factors (including domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, intellectual disability, whether the parent grew-up in OOHC)
- Child Characteristics: demographics, temperament, exposure to risk of significant harm (type/ duration/ severity), age at entry to OOHC
- Caregiver Characteristics: demographics, family composition, health and wellbeing, caregiver experience and training, relationship with child, facilitated family contact, parenting style, activities with child, informal support network, satisfaction with being a carer
- OOHC Services and Support: assessment of child's needs, provision of services, casework support, case planning, family contact, carer training and support, caseworkers relationship with child and family, advocacy, restoration, adoption
- OOHC Placement Characteristics: placement type, duration, stability, placed with siblings, culturally matched, physical environment, location, neighbourhood and social cohesion
- Child Experience in OOHC: safety, permanency, identity, felt security, peer relationships, childcare/school/work, self-efficacy, participation in decision making
- Child Outcomes: safety, physical health, socio-emotional wellbeing, cognitive/learning ability.

Record linkage data: The POCLS survey data is linked to administrative data held by NSW DCJ (risk of significant harm reports, legal orders, entries to and exits from care, and placements); NSW Ministry of Health (hospitalisations, emergency department attendances, perinatal data, ambulatory mental health services, and deaths); NSW Department of Education (National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy); NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research (Reoffending Database); Medical Benefits Schedule, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and the Australian Early Development Census. Record linkage to these administrative datasets was completed by the NSW Centre for Health Record Linkage (CHeReL) www.cherel.org.au/. These data provide service use measures, indicators of abuse and neglect and broad outcome indicators for children in the POCLS cohort. Further information is available in the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data.

NSW My Personal Health Record (Health Blue Book): De-identified scanned copies of the book are part of the POCLS data asset if provided by the carer at the Wave 1 interview.

Figure 1: POCLS Data Asset



3 How to access to the POCLS data asset

Contacts and information about access to the POCLS data

- Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study Mailbox Pathways@facs.nsw.gov.au
- Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care

Responsibility of DCJ

The POCLS Chief Investigator leads a research team responsible for:

- Receiving and assessing the merit of research proposals and supporting those that are feasible, innovative and have integrity and potential to inform policy and practice
- Co-ordinating in-kind and financial support to projects
- Requesting ethics approval for all analysts with direct access to the survey data and/or linkage data (see Appendix 2 for more details about ethics)
- Linking researchers and policy/program areas to ensure the research questions align with DCJ strategic objectives
- Attending meetings, monitoring progress and conducting a technical review of draft manuscripts to ensure DCJ data is interpreted accurately and clients cannot be identified in the analysis and reporting
- Knowledge mobilisation activities built into the project to maximise the translation of research findings to policy, practice, programs, staff development and strategic planning
- Disseminating research findings.

Internal analysts access to the POCLS data asset

Analysts in DCJ requesting to access the POCLS data asset are responsible for familiarising themselves with the POCLS design, data documentation and submitting an application as per the Guidelines.

External researchers access to the POCLS data asset

External researchers may access the POCLS data asset in two ways:

- Service Agreement for external researchers who are commissioned by DCJ to undertake targeted research projects

- Research Agreement for external researchers who have their own resources/funding to undertake a project using the POCLS data asset.

The lead researcher is responsible for familiarising themselves with the POCLS design and data documentation by reading the POCLS Technical Report No. 1: Objectives and Strategic Research Agenda 2019-2020 which includes a list of data user resources and technical reports. Researchers applying to access the POCLS record linkage data should read the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data. The POCLS publications and data user resources are available on the POCLS webpage: www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/pocls-publication

The lead researcher is responsible for following the application and publication process:

- Appendix 1: A flow chart outlining the steps to access the POCLS data and publication
- Appendix 2: Frequently asked questions about access to the POCLS data and publishing results
- Appendix 3: POCLS application form to access the POCLS data asset.
- Appendix 4: Review and approval of the applications to access POCLS data asset.

For approved projects, the lead researcher is responsible for:

- Adhering to the signed Agreement and advising/discussing with Chief Investigator any changes to the approved data analysis plan, project timelines, monitoring schedule and project personnel
- Following the DCJ principles on reporting results of Aboriginal children, caregivers, caseworkers and teachers; and involving Aboriginal stakeholders in the interpretation and reporting of the findings
- Consulting with relevant data custodians to interpret the analysis and report the findings accurately.

4 Secure Unified Research Environment (SURE)

The POCLS data are stored securely in the Secure Unified Research Environment (SURE) managed by the Sax Institute www.saxinstitute.org.au/our-work/sure/

A project workspace is established for each approved research project hosted in SURE. Studies in SURE must have the approval of a human research ethics committee (HREC) and only study investigators named in the HREC application can have virtual computing environments established within a project workspace. If a researcher is part of more than one study hosted by SURE, the researcher's virtual computing environments for each project workspace (corresponding to a research study) are logically separated from each other and cannot interact or share data in any way.

A range of information security controls relating to the access, storage and transmission of data have been built into the design of the SURE facility, including that access to SURE requires multiple factors of authentication and SURE is hosted in a tier3+ data centre. No data is stored on a researcher's local computer or institutional computing environment. Within SURE, a user cannot access the internet, email, print or copy data to a USB memory stick or other removable media. All files moving into or out of SURE pass through the Curated Gateway. Files are subject to review as they pass through the Curated Gateway before they can be accessed within or outside the SURE facility. Regular onsite and offsite backups of data are made. All offsite backups and archival data are encrypted prior to being transferred to secure offsite storage. All users are required to undertake training on issues of privacy, ethics, information security and statistical disclosure control prior to gaining access to SURE and must sign a deed outlining the terms and conditions of using SURE.

Access to SURE requires a username, passphrase and physical token (Yubikey) or electronic Mi-Token. SURE users also need to install a personal digital certificate on each computer from which they access SURE. These are supplied to a user by the SURE team.

Appendix 5 maps the steps involved to make POCLS data available to external researchers in SURE. It is applicable both to researchers commissioned by DCJ to conduct targeted research projects, researchers approaching DCJ for in-kind support by way of access to the POCLS data asset, and to DCJ analysts accessing record linkage datasets.

5 Review of analysis

All publications resulted from the POCLS data analysis must be submitted to DCJ for review and approval prior to publication.

Review process

Aboriginal reference group and stakeholders

Guidelines on analysis, interpretation of the results and reporting data collected from Aboriginal participants are forthcoming. All analysts are expected to comply with the guidelines. Where the DCJ Aboriginal reference group have nominate to be involved in a project roundtables will be held with the group and other stakeholders to discuss the results of analysis and interpretation of the data before publication.

Technical review

The final manuscript (once reviewed by all authors of the report) and the completed POCLS Report Submission Checklist are required to be submitted by the lead researcher to DCJ before publishing (Appendix 6). The DCJ POCLS research team will review the analysis against the proposed data analysis plan using the POCLS Technical Review Template (Appendix 7). Once the manuscript is reviewed, comments from the technical review will be sent back to the authors to address. There is an expectation that the review will be completed within an agreed timeframe.

Policy and program area review

Once the report is technically sound, it is reviewed by the relevant DCJ policy and program area to ensure the data has been interpreted correctly within the policy context (Appendix 8). Once the manuscript is reviewed, comments from the program area review will be sent back to the authors to address. There is an expectation that the review will be completed within an agreed timeframe.

Peer review

An external blind peer review process is undertaken for DCJ commissioned reports published on the POCLS webpage (Appendix 8). The DCJ will not undertake a peer review process if researchers are publishing the results in a peer review journal as this will be done by the journal editor. There is an expectation that the review will be completed within an agreed timeframe.

Author's response to reviews

All reviews of the final draft report will be sent back to the authors to address. The revised and final version of the report, together with written responses to the reviews, are then re-submitted by the authors to DCJ within four weeks of receiving the review. In the review template, the authors are required to respond to each comment/issue raised by the reviewers and state if the comment has been addressed and if not, the reasons for not

addressing the comment. The DCJ research team may send the authors responses back to the reviewers and ask them if they are satisfied with the authors' response.

Reporting small numbers and case studies

The privacy and confidentiality of study participants must be maintained. Guidance on the reporting of small sample sizes is documented in POCLS Technical Report No. 16: Guidelines for Reporting Small Numbers available at www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/pocls-publication

Case studies must be confidentialised by supressing identifying characteristics such as geography, gender and age. Please contact the POCLS Data Manager for further advice.

Expected project outputs

At the completion of DCJ funded projects the researcher will be expected to:

- Deliver publications equivalent to quality of manuscripts submitted to academic journals
- Provide a report that documents the study's aims, literature review (if applicable), methods, findings, policy relevance and conclusion
- Provide the evidence to action learnings from the analysis - what are the key applications of the results to policy and programs template to facilitate knowledge translation (Appendix 9)
- Deliver the report in the POCLS publication template following the DCJ style guide (Appendix 10) or peer review journal article as agreed.

The expectation is that external researchers receiving in-kind support only will publish in peer review journals and the link to the journal article will be added to the POCLS webpage.

6 Approvals to publish

Once the review process is complete, a number of approvals are required prior to publishing.

Approval by the AH&MRC ethics committee

As part of the ethics approval, DCJ must submit all reports presenting results to the AH&MRC ethics committee for approval before publishing.

Approval by record linkage data custodians

All reports presenting results from record linkage datasets must comply with the external data custodian requirements before publication. Data custodians of administrative data must approve the manuscript before it is submitted for publication. It is the responsibility of the authors of the report to submit their manuscript to and follow up with the relevant data custodians for approval. Please allow adequate time for data custodians review and approval. Refer to the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data. A copy of the approval should be provided to DCJ for their records.

Final approval by to publish

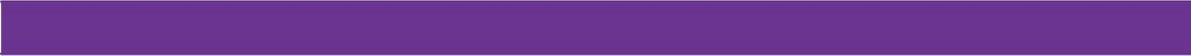
Final approval for all publications is granted by DCJ as the Chief Investigator and project funder, lead Research Organisation and data custodians. This includes the publication of journal articles. Please refer to the 'Permission to Publish Contract Material' in the DCJ Research/Service Agreement.

A lead 'editor' will be nominated in DCJ based on content/technical expertise and is required to review all the reviewers' feedback, responses by the lead authors and the 'final' version of the manuscript before making a recommendation (using the approval template) to the POCLS Chief Investigator/Executive Director as to whether to publish the manuscript or not.

Any concerns about publishing will be discussed with the authors. If these are able to be resolved then the publication will proceed. However, if they cannot be resolved, the publication may not be able to proceed or may be delayed. Any disagreements regarding publication will be resolved in consultation with the Chief Investigator and Executive Director.

Publishing reports

The DCJ has a publication series and style guide and it is expected that researchers contracted to undertake analysis will follow publish the results as a POCLS publication (see Appendix 10).



Every publication reporting the POCLS data will be uploaded to the POCLS clearinghouse, including links to journal articles.

The DCJ will finalise the proof reading, design and typesetting of results being published in the DCJ research or technical reports series.

Researchers are encouraged to publish the POCLS results through scientific channels once the analysis is finalised and approved. As per the DCJ Agreement permission to publish contracted material in journals must be sought beforehand even if the material has been previously approved.

7 Authorship and acknowledgements

Authorship

In line with American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, authorship requires input into the conceptualisation of the analysis, interpretation of the results and writing of the manuscript. Authorship credit should reflect the individual's contribution.

There should be a nominated lead author, who assumes responsibility for all aspects of the manuscript ensuring:

- Accuracy of the information, in keeping with the clauses on Confidentiality and Ethical Obligations in the signed DCJ Research Agreements so that no individuals can be identified in any draft manuscripts
- All deserving authors have been credited and authorship order is based on contribution to the conception, analysis, interpretation and writing of the manuscript with the agreement of the contributing authors
- All authors have given their approval to the final draft
- All conditions stipulated by the relevant data custodians have been met prior to publication (refer to the contents of this publication and the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data)
- All conditions stipulated by the ethics committees have been met prior to publication - this includes the need for the AH&MRC to review all manuscripts prior to publication
- All conditions stipulated by the DCJ Research/Service Agreements are upheld.

The lead author is also responsible for handling responses to inquiries after the manuscript is published.

Any disagreements regarding authorship and acknowledgements that cannot be resolved by the lead author will be resolved in consultation with the POCLS Chief Investigator.

Acknowledgements and disclaimers in publications

Please note the requirement to add acknowledgements and disclaimers in publications. Contributors with the following roles do not necessarily qualify for authorship but should be acknowledged in the Acknowledgements section: provision of funding or resources, interviewers/fieldwork teams, data custodians for record linkage and data integration mentorship, overall supervision of the project, and commenting on or proof reading drafts but not helping with conceptualising, conducting and interpreting data and writing the actual publication.

Where appropriate the following acknowledgements and disclaimers are recommended for all publications:

Disclaimer

DCJ funds and leads the Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study. The findings and views reported in this publication are those of the authors and should not be attributed to any data custodians. The authors are grateful for the reviewers' comments

Data providers and data integration

The data access agreements between DCJ and each data custodian providing data to the POCLS should be appropriately acknowledged.

All the POCLS data in this report is accurate as of [date]. The analyses presented in this report uses data from the [select what is appropriate]:

- DCJ POCLS survey data waves [add numbers 1, 2, 3, 4] [select unweighted or weighted] collected in face-to-face interviews with children, young people and caregivers.
- DCJ POCLS on-line caseworker survey.
- DCJ POCLS on-line teacher survey.
- Record linkage data provided to the POCLS by NSW DCJ, NSW Department of Health, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, NSW Department of Education and the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.
- Centre for Health Record Linkage (CHeReL) NSW Ministry of Health is gratefully acknowledged as the linkage authority.

Study design

NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), the Australian Institute of Family Studies; Sax Institute, I-view Social Research, Professor Judy Cashmore, University of Sydney; Professor Paul Delfabbro, University of Adelaide; Professor Ilan Katz, University of NSW; Dr Fred Wulczyn, Chapin Hall Center for Children University of Chicago. Ongoing advice is provided by the DCJ policy and program areas.

POCLS Chief Investigator and research team

Name as appropriate at the time.

Study data collection

I-view Social Research.

Study data management

Sax Institute.

Aboriginal reference group

As appropriate referring to the DCJ principles on reporting results of Aboriginal children, caregivers, caseworkers and teachers; and involving Aboriginal stakeholders in the interpretation and reporting of the findings.

Support to the participants

Expert advice and support has been provided by the CREATE Foundation; Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat (AbSec); My Forever Family NSW - Adopt Change.

Acknowledgements

We wish to extend our thanks to all the children, young people and caregivers who participated in interviews; childcare teachers, school teachers and caseworkers who participated in on-line survey interviews; and the data custodians in the relevant NSW and Commonwealth government departments. Ms Sammy Verma grew up in care and played a key role in the production of the study video for children and stakeholders. Ms Billy Black also grew up in care and designed the study artwork. Ms Sammy Verma and Mr Samuel Eyeson-Annan both did the voiceover for the audio computer-assisted self-interview (ACASI) for the child/young person interview.

Ethics approval

University of NSW Human Research Ethics Committee (UNSW HREC) (Approval numbers HC 10335, HC 16542), the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) of NSW Ethics Committee (Approval number 766/10) and the NSW Population and Health Services Research Ethics Committee (Approval number HREC/14/CIPHS/74 Cancer Institute NSW 2014/12/570).

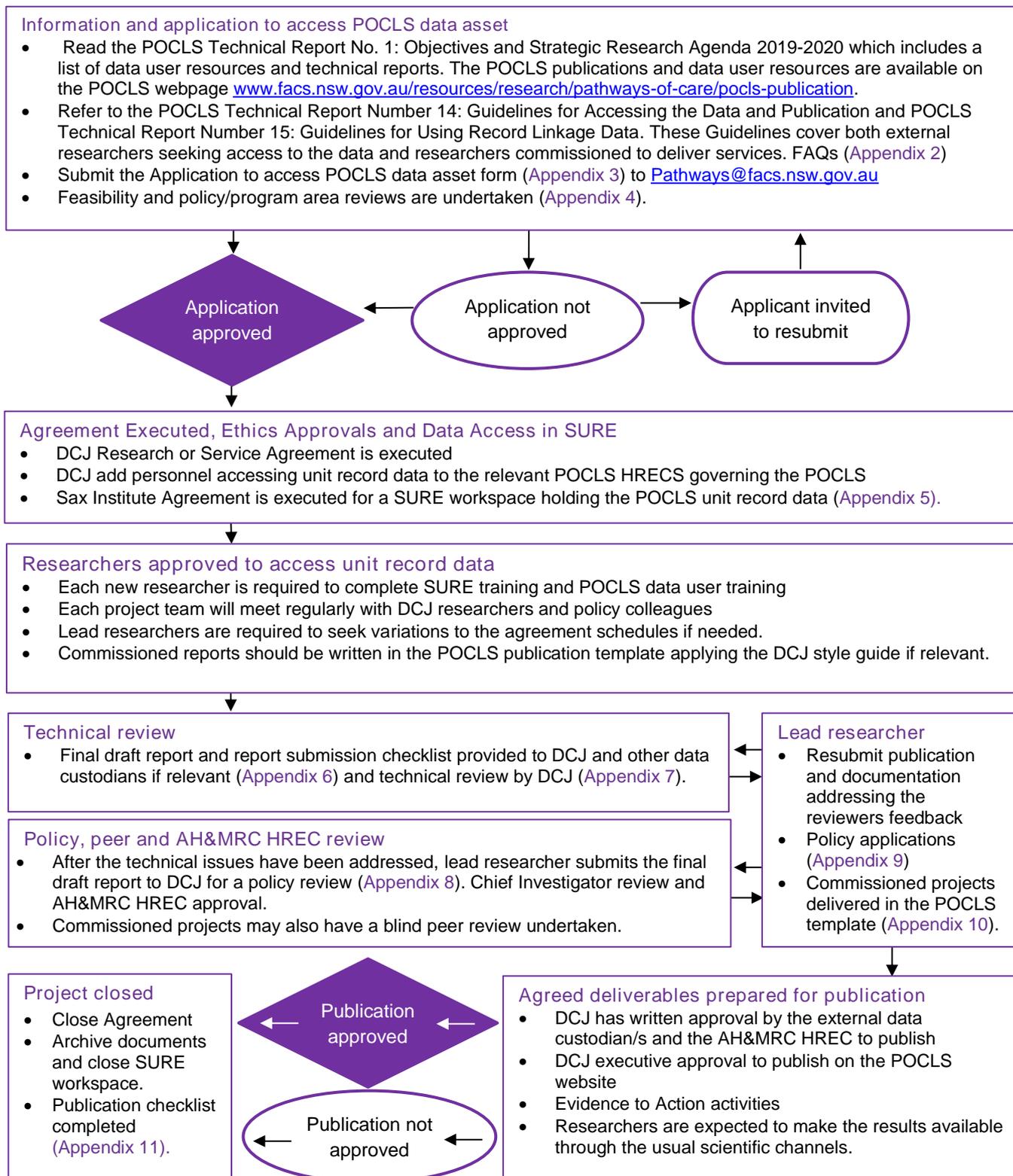
Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study Clearinghouse

All study publications including research reports, technical reports and bulletins can be found on the study webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care.

Financial and in-kind support

Financial and in-kind support contributions for the project and should be appropriately acknowledged.

Appendix 1: Flowchart of POCLS data access and publication



Appendix 2: Frequently asked questions about POCLS data access and publication

What legislation governs access to the POCLS data?

The values and principles outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NH&MRC) [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2018\)](#) govern all External Research activities at DCJ.

We are also guided by the ethical standards outlined in the following Acts:

- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- The Children and Young Person's Care and Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- The Adoption Act 2000 (NSW).

What ethics governs access to the POCLS data?

Ethics approval for the study was obtained from:

- UNSW Human Research Ethics Committee (approval number HC10335 & HC16542)
- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW Ethics Committee (approval number 766/10)
- NSW Department of Education and Communities State Education Research Approval Process (SERAP, approval number 2012260) and the Catholic Education Office Sydney (and relevant diocese) approval for the childcare worker and teacher surveys.
- NSW Population & Health Services Research Ethics Committee (Ref: HREC/14/CIPHS/74 Cancer Institute NSW: 2014/12/570) approval for record linkages.

It is not necessary to obtain separate ethics for the POCLS survey and linked data if the project is within scope of the POCLS ethics approvals. It is the responsibility of the researcher to check with their own Institution's policies and provide written confirmation that their Institution's ethics committee do not need to approve the project. It is the SURE can provide a standard letter detailing the arrangements for storing and analysing data suitable for inclusion with an ethics application.

What project personnel should be added to the POCLS ethics application?

Project teams are made up of people with varying roles. Not all members of the project team need to be added to the POCLS ethics application. As a rule, only analysts who will have access to the de-identified unit record data in SURE need to be added to the POCLS ethics. The POCLS Chief Investigator will make the request.

Please use the list below to guide you:

- The principal researcher of each project accessing the de-identified unit record data in SURE need to be on the ethics application
- Only analysts who will have access to the de-identified unit record data in SURE need to be on the ethics application
- All researchers who are involved in the write up of aggregated tables only (i.e., do not have access to de-identified unit record data in SURE) do not need to be on the ethics application
- Any authors on published papers who do not have access to the de-identified unit record data in SURE do not need to be on the ethics application.

Do researchers need a Working with Children Check?

External researchers accessing the POCLS data are not required to have a Working with Children Check.

Who can apply to access the POCLS data?

All suitably qualified researchers with experience in child protection/OOHC research and quantitative data analysis are encouraged to apply.

The DCJ will consider applications that involve collaborations between research centres and projects where funding is sought from research bodies.

The DCJ will consider applications that involve collaborations between DCJ and an external research body.

Applications by post graduate students are accepted and preference is given Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students whose supervisor(s) meet these criteria; and post-doctoral candidates.

How do I apply to access the POCLS data?

All proposals need to be submitted using the Application template (Appendix 3).

The Application needs to specify the research questions and the modules/variable names from the relevant data dictionaries that are required to answer them. The research questions have to be within the scope approved by the HRECs.

All data user documentation is available on the webpage at www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/Information-for-data-users.

Are there any limits on the number of applications submitted to access the POCLS data?

While there are no limits on the number of POCLS applications that can be held by a single researcher or research group, the POCLS is not an open data resource. All applications need to be within the scope of the ethics approved project, address DCJ strategic objectives and benefit the evidence base to inform improvements to policy and practice.

What are the submission dates and timelines?

There will be several submission dates per year. The schedule will be posted on www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/POCLS-updates.

Adequate time needs to be factored into the timelines for the approval process and project set-up which could take up to 4 months.

What is the process to approve applications to access POCLS data?

Applications will be reviewed by the POCLS Working Group made up of the relevant policy and program areas and external experts. Projects must align with DCJ strategic objectives and POCLS key research questions. Reviewers will consider:

- Proposed Quality and Innovation: Does the research directly address one or more of the DCJ priority policy areas? Is the conceptual/theoretical framework innovative and original? Will the aims, concepts, methods and results advance knowledge?
- Feasibility: Does the project's design and leadership provide confidence in the timely and successful completion of the research?
- Benefit: Does the research address multiple domains/ priorities/ policy areas? Will the proposed research be cost-effective and value for money? Does it duplicate a project that is completed or underway?
- Candidate: Evidence of past performance. Time and capacity to undertake the proposed research.

The POCLS team will review the proposed variables and notify the researcher(s) of any potential data issues associated with the use of those variables.

If the Application duplicates research completed or underway the lead researcher will be notified.

Applications can be resubmitted.

The final approval of proposals will be made by the POCLS Chief Investigator.

What agreements/ contracts are required to access the POCLS data?

All successful applicants will be required to sign the DCJ Service Agreement (for contracted work) or Research Agreement (for in-kind support). Agreements require insurance documents and confidentiality agreements.

The Research and Service Agreements clauses are not open to negotiation unless approved by DCJ Legal. Please note that this may delay the commencement of the project.

The publication of all manuscripts must comply with the executed Agreement.

Are variations to the executed agreement accepted?

A variation to the Agreement may be required where a) new data are required (for e.g. a new module, different cohort) b) additional research questions are going to be answered which differ from the initial proposal c) data analysis plan has changed substantially d) new personnel are added to the project team. This will be assessed on a case by case basis. Variations should be discussed with the POCLS Chief Investigator prior to any modifications being implemented.

What is the payment schedule for service agreements?

In general, funds will be provided in two instalments, 50% payable at the start of the project and 50% on receipt of a final report at the conclusion of the project.

Does DCJ charge fees to access the POCLS data?

DCJ does not have fees to access the POCLS survey or linkage data.

How is secure access to the data provided?

The POCLS data is stored in the Secure Unified Research Environment (SURE). For more information please visit the website <https://www.saxinstitute.org.au/our-work/sure/>

All analysts accessing the data in SURE need to sign a SURE Agreement and be named on relevant HRECs. A breach of SURE user access will result in the project being stopped.

The Sax Institute will manage SURE access applications, granting of SURE licenses for approved data users and assisting users regarding the SURE setup.

The DCJ as the data custodian is the SURE curator and responsible for reviewing and approving all files taken in/out of SURE. While researchers are allowed access to the full data sets within SURE, only output within the parameters of the approved project will be released from SURE.

The DCJ can curate outside of working hours but advanced notice is required during working hours.

Does SURE charge fees to access the POCLS data?

SURE has fees to establish and hold a Workspace for the project in SURE which will need to be paid for by external researchers requesting in-kind access to the POCLS data. Research Organisations are invoiced on an annual basis for SURE services. The first invoice is issued when the agreement between the Sax Institute and the Research Organisation is signed.

Researchers contracted by DCJ for deliverables will not have to pay SURE fees.

Post graduate students and Aboriginal researchers are eligible for a special rate.

Are policy, program and analytical support available to researchers?

Members of the POCLS Working Group and Advisory Group will be invited to nominate their interest in being an advisor to the project. External researchers and DCJ staff may also be invited based on expertise.

What are the principles governing data collected from Aboriginal children and caregivers?

Principles are being developed for analysis focusing on Aboriginal children and caregivers in the POCLS and research must comply with these. An Aboriginal reference group will be involved in reviewing applications, interpretation of results and approval of publications.

Is there training for POCLS data users?

Attending data user training is a requirement to access the data. The Sax Institute and DCJ will run data user training several times per year. The schedule will be posted on www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/Information-for-data-users.

How are projects monitored?

While the project is underway regular monitoring by DCJ will be established. The lead researcher on every project which is open or closed in the past 12 months will be asked to complete an annual progress update.

Can I archive my output in SURE when the project is completed?

Access to the POCLS will be closed approximately two months after the deliverables are finalised. Documents can be released from SURE or archived in SURE. Please see

SURE for related fees and conditions of access <https://www.saxinstitute.org.au/our-work/sure/>

What is the publication review and approval process?

All final draft reports once endorsed by all the co-authors is required to have a technical and policy review by DCJ to ensure the data is accurate; the results are interpreted accurately and clients cannot be identified in the analysis and reporting. The timeframes for review are agreed on before the agreement is executed. Commissioned projects may also have a blind peer review conducted.

Where are DCJ funded reports published?

Reports contracted by DCJ will be published on the POCLS webpage. Researchers are encouraged to also make the results available through the usual scientific channels.

Where are non-DCJ funded reports published?

The expectation is that external researchers receiving in-kind support only will publish in peer review journals.

Who is responsible for knowledge translation?

The DCJ will undertake knowledge translations activities. Lead researchers are expected to be involved in distilling the policy applications from their results. The DCJ welcomes participation and collaboration in evidence to action activities such as input into the evidence to action notes, research to practice seminars, podcasts and conference presentations.

Appendix 3: Application form to access POCLS survey and record linkage data

Project Title	
Date of application	__/__/20__
Applicant's name & title	
Position	
Institution	
Phone	
Email	
A. Researcher's details	
Title/name - Principal investigator 1	
Position	
Institution	
Phone	
Email	
Title/name - Principal investigator 2	
Position	
Institution	
Phone	
Email	
Title/name - Principal investigator 3	
Position	
Institution	
Phone	

Email	
Is the research project part of a university degree?	<input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes, post-doctoral degree <input type="radio"/> Yes, PhD If YES, Students name: _____ Supervisor's name: _____
Names of the statisticians on this project	
Are you interested in partnering with DCJ researchers	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
B. Leadership Summary	
Include a summary of the project leader's track record, briefly indicating current position; top 5 publications; awards and grants; contribution to the scientific community; and any other relevant information. 1,000 word limit.	
C. Research project details	
Priority policy areas Tick all that apply	<input type="radio"/> OOHC service system and factors that influence children outcomes <input type="radio"/> Permanency options and children's outcomes <input type="radio"/> Experiences of children and young people and developmental outcomes <input type="radio"/> Carer characteristics and how to better support carers <input type="radio"/> Experiences and developmental outcomes for child cohorts of interest
Key policy focus Up to 5 key words	
NSW Human Services Outcome Framework Tick all that apply	www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/human-services-outcomes-framework <input type="radio"/> Social and Community <input type="radio"/> Empowerment <input type="radio"/> Safety <input type="radio"/> Education & skills <input type="radio"/> Economic <input type="radio"/> Health <input type="radio"/> Home <input type="radio"/> Other (specify)
Key cohort focus	<input type="radio"/> Children and young people <input type="radio"/> Aboriginal children and young people <input type="radio"/> Carers

Tick all that apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aboriginal carers ○ Caseworkers ○ Teachers ○ Birth family ○ All of the above ○ Other (specify)
Geographical focus Tick all that apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Metro ○ Regional ○ Remote ○ All of the above ○ Other (specify)
Databases being requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Linkage data – Child protection and OOHC records ○ Linkage data – Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) ○ Linkage data – National assessment program – literacy and numeracy records (NAPLAN) ○ Linkage data – Offending records ○ Linkage data – Health perinatal records ○ Linkage data – Health admitted patients records ○ Linkage data – Health emergency department records ○ Linkage data – Health ambulatory records ○ Linkage data – Medical Benefits Scheme (MBS) ○ Linkage data – Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) ○ Child and caregiver survey data ○ Child felt security activity data ○ Teacher survey data ○ Caseworker survey data ○ NSW My Personal Health Record (Health Blue Book) Scans
Child and caregiver survey data modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AC_CHILD ACTIVITIES ○ AD_ADOPTION FROM OOHC ○ BE_CHILD BEHAVIOURS, FEELINGS AND SUPPORT ○ CC_CHILDCARE AND PRESCHOOL EDUCATION ○ CD_CAREGIVER SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ○ CH_CAREGIVER HEALTH AND WELLBEING ○ CP_BIRTH PARENTS EXPERIENCES BEFORE REMOVAL ○ FC_BIRTH FAMILY CONTACT ○ FS_CAREGIVER FORMAL SUPPORT & SATISFACTION ○ HH_CAREGIVER HOUSEHOLD GRID ○ HS_CHILD HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES ○ IN_INTRODUCTION TO THE CHILD AND CAREGIVERS ○ IS_CAREGIVER INFORMAL SUPPORT ○ IV_INTERVIEW DETAILS ○ KD_CHILD SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ○ LA_CHILD COGNITIVE AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT ○ LE_LEAVING CARE ○ NE_CAREGIVER NEIGHBOURHOOD SOCIAL COHESION ○ OC_CHILD OTHER COMMENTS ○ PC_SETTING UP THE PLACEMENT AND ONGOING CASEWORK ○ PI_CHILD PERSONAL IDENTITY ○ PL_PLACEMENT CHARACTERISTICS/WHERE THE CHILD IS LIVING ○ RC_RELATIONSHIPS-CHILD AND OTHER (CAREGIVER, FAMILY, FRIENDS), FELT SECURITY AND PARENTING STYLE ○ RE_RELATIONSHIPS – CAREGIVER AND PARTNER ○ RT_BIRTH PARENTS EXPERIENCES OF RESTORATION ○ SC_CHILD SCHOOL EDUCATION AND FRIENDS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SD_BIRTH PARENTS EXPERIENCES DURING OOHC ○ TE_CHILD TEMPERAMENT ○ WE_CHILD WORK AND FURTHER EDUCATION
Teacher survey data modules – data dictionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BE_CHILD BEHAVIOURS, FEELINGS AND SUPPORT ○ IV_INTERVIEW DETAILS ○ KD_CHILD SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ○ SC_CHILD SCHOOL EDUCATION AND FRIENDS
Caseworker survey data modules – data dictionary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FC_BIRTH FAMILY CONTACT ○ HS_CHILD HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES ○ IV_INTERVIEW DETAILS ○ KD_CHILD SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ○ LE_LEAVING CARE ○ PC_SETTING UP THE PLACEMENT AND ONGOING CASEWORK ○ PL_PLACEMENT CHARACTERISTICS/WHERE THE CHILD IS LIVING ○ RC_RELATIONSHIPS - CHILD AND OTHERS (CAREGIVERS/FAMILY/FRIENDS) ○ RT_RESTORATION FROM OOHC ○ SC_CHILD SCHOOL EDUCATION AND FRIENDS ○ SU_SUPPORT TO CASEWORKERS

D. Research project rationale, brief analysis plan and significance to policy/programs

Please provide a summary of your proposed project plan by providing the following information:

1. Research questions
2. Rationale
3. Aims and/or hypotheses
4. Data analysis plan
5. Significance to policy and practice
6. Expected outputs (research report, journal article, technical report, evidence to action note, other specify)

2,000 word limit.

How does this research address DCJ strategic objectives? (see the DCJ Strategic Plan)

https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about_us/publications

300 word limit.

How will this project inform the outcomes for Aboriginal clients? Describe the impact (benefits, risks, sensitivities) of this analysis for Aboriginal people and communities.

300 word limit.

Please describe any risks and contentious issues presented by this research

Consult your research ethics application

300 word limit.

E. Other Funding

Indicate here if you are planning on applying or already have applied for funding from other bodies to support this project. Funding details – Include: Award type, Name, Category and reference/ application number if known

300 word limit.

F: Project timelines

Expected start date and end date

G: Ethics approval or exemption

POCLS has ethics for the project. Does your Institution require additional ethical review and approval from your Institution?

H: Data management plan and archiving material at the end of the project

300 word limit.

I: Other information you would like to provide?

300 word limit.

Appendix 4: Review of the application to access POCLS survey and record linkage data

Type of review:

- Policy/program area review
- Aboriginal policy area review
- POCLS team review
- Other specify _____

Reviewer's name and position: _____ Date of review: _____

Project Title	
Does the POCLS have the data to support the proposed project?	
Comment on the relevance to policy, program and OOHC priorities	
Does this research address DCJ strategic objectives	
Please describe any risks and contentious issues presented by this research	
Assessment criteria for grants	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Proposed Quality and Innovation</u>: Does the research directly address one or more of the DCJ priority policy areas? Is the conceptual/theoretical framework innovative and original? Will the aims, concepts, methods and results advance knowledge?• <u>Feasibility</u>: Does the project's design and leadership provide confidence in the timely and successful completion of the research?• <u>Benefit</u>: Does the research address multiple domains/ priorities/ policy areas? Will the proposed research be cost-effective and value for money? Does it duplicate a project that is completed or underway.• <u>Candidate</u>: Evidence of past performance. Time and capacity to undertake the proposed research.	
Other comments about the proposed project	

Recommendation

- Accept
- Resubmit for minor revisions
- Consider again after major revision
- Reject

Please return by email to the POCLS Project Manager: Pathways@facns.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 5: Steps to access to POCLS data in SURE

Step	Name of step	Description of step	Responsibility of	Details and notes	Relevant documents
1	Research Application	Lead researcher apply to DCJ to access and use the POCLS data in a defined research project.	External researcher; DCJ internal analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the planned research project with a designated officer from the POCLS research team. Complete the Research Application Form in full and email to: Pathways@facs.nsw.gov.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCLS Application Form see Appendix 3 The schedule will be posted on the website
2	Research Application Feasibility Review	A transparent review the feasibility and if the proposal is within scope of the HREC approvals.	POCLS Chief Investigator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review will be undertaken by DCJ policy and program areas and external experts including Aboriginal stakeholders. The review considers the research questions and their relevance to DCJ strategic objectives, appropriateness and robustness of the methodology, whether the data will support the analysis and the research is within the scope of the ethics approvals. The researcher may be asked to provide additional information or resubmit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Appendix 4
3	Ethics approval for survey data and/or record linkage data	<p>Gain the approval from study's registered HRECs.</p> <p>Additional step – requirements of the external institutions the researchers are from.</p>	<p>POCLS Chief Investigator</p> <p>Additional step: external researcher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers are responsible to abide by the conditions and constraints of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) and any other relevant Institution and/or statutory requirements. DCJ will add approved projects and researchers to the appropriate POCLS HRECs approvals. The researcher is required to check with their own Institution regarding ethics approval policies and submit ethics applications as appropriate. SURE can provide a standard letter detailing the arrangements for storing data suitable for inclusion with an ethics application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCLS Technical Report Number 14: Guidelines for Accessing the Data and Publication POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data
4	Sign Agreement to protect data security, client confidentiality and privacy, intellectual property	DCJ Research Agreement for external researchers applying to access POCLS data. DCJ Service Agreement for external researchers commissioned by	External Researcher's Institution and FACSIAR Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DCJ <u>Service</u> or <u>Research</u> Agreement template must be used for all external researchers. Any requested changes to the terms must be reviewed by DCJ Legal. All schedules need to be completed. POCLS Chief Investigator and Executive Director execute the Agreement on DCJ's behalf.¹ Successful applicants will be required to seek DCJ approval for any amendments /changes to the Schedule for example, timelines, deliverables, analysis plan, investigators and variables being used in analysis <u>before</u> implemented. 	<p>On request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCJ Research Agreement DCJ Service Agreement <p>Register of projects and review</p>

		DCJ to conduct targeted research. NA for DCJ analysts.		Once the Agreement has been executed, researchers seeking to access record linkage data would inform the relevant data custodian(s) of the project and seek endorsement – see template letter in the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data.	outcomes (internal use only)
5	Apply for SURE workspace	Workspace Application Form completed and submitted to SURE	POCLS Chief Investigator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCJ inform the Sax Institute of approval for a new project SURE issues a cost estimate to the Chief Investigator which is incorporated in the workspace agreement. DCJ will pay the SURE costs for DCJ funded projects. The researcher will pay the SURE costs for projects not funded by DCJ. The POCLS Chief Investigator submits a signed and scanned application form via email to: SURE-admin@saxinstitute.org.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCJ will provide the SURE Workspace Application Form HREC and DCJ approval to be supplied by DCJ
6	SURE and the Research Organisation ² sign a SURE Workspace Agreement for provision of the Project Folder	A SURE standard Agreement for SURE access is prepared by the Sax Institute and provided to the External Research Organisation for countersigning.	Sax Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange for the SURE Agreement to be signed by the Research Organisation with appropriate delegation for approval of payment. SURE Agreement includes a quote that forms part of the signed SURE Agreement. DCJ has responsibility for curation of all POCLS project workspaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External researchers only, SURE Workspace Agreement
7	SURE Invoicing	Research Organisations are invoiced on an annual basis for SURE services	Sax Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External research projects receiving the POCLS data by way of in-kind support will be invoiced on an annual basis for SURE services. The first invoice is issued when the agreement between the Sax Institute and the Research Organisation is signed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External researchers only, SURE Workspace Agreement Invoice
8	SURE Training	Upon payment of the invoice for the project workspace, SURE will issue “Moodle”, login and password.	Sax Institute; Research Organisation; DCJ analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each new user of SURE is required to complete the training (online in “Moodle”) and is then accredited to access SURE. Completion of training modules is a prerequisite for access to SURE. Upon payment of the invoice for the project workspace, SURE will issue each approved member of the research organisation a link to the standard SURE training “Moodle”, login and password On completion of training, SURE issues researchers with login credentials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researchers who have not used SURE only, SURE training “Moodle”, login and password

9	SURE Access	SURE login credentials. Sax Institute notifies the designated POCLS Data Manager that the project workspace is available.	Sax Institute; Research Organisation; DCJ analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers use the SURE Setup Guide to install required certificates and login to SURE. • Follow the SURE Setup Guide and login to SURE. Check that the project folder is correctly named and that no other project folders are visible. • Sax Institute sets up the required project folder, users and permissions. • Sax Institute notifies the designated POCLS Data Manager that the project workspace is available to receive data via the curated gateway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SURE Setup Guide
10	Data copied to Project Folder	The lead researcher can make their copy of the relevant dataset (i.e., non-linkage data) and save it in their own project folder for analysis. If the proposed project requires record linkage data, DCJ Data Manager will copy the relevant linkage data into the project folder and advise the lead researcher that data is available.	DCJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once HREC approvals are received, the Research or Service Agreement is executed, a SURE Workspace Agreement is signed and SURE training is complete, the researchers will be given access to data in the POCLS workspace. • The POCLS survey data and DCJ administrative data are stored in the 'POCLS-Common' folder in SURE, to which all researchers have access. • Researchers should only work with their own copy of data and should not make/save changes to the POCLS data sets in the POCLS-Common folder. If you accidentally do that, please notify the DCJ Data Manager immediately so that the original version can be restored. • Record linkage data are stored in a separate location and will only be made available to researchers whose approved project involves the use of record linkage data. • DCJ has the responsibility for curation of all POCLS project workspaces. Only data requested in the approved application will be curated out of SURE. Please be familiar with the POCLS guidelines on reporting small numbers. • A breach of SURE user access will result in the project being suspended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The POCLS publications and data user resources are available on the POCLS webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care/pocls-publication.
11	POCLS data user training	The Sax Institute and DCJ will run data user training	Research Organisation; DCJ analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending POCLS data user training is a requirement to access the data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schedule will be posted on the website

Notes: Also see Appendix 2 Frequently Asked Questions and the POCLS webpage www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/research/pathways-of-care

1. The Institute of Open Adoption Studies projects also receive approval from the Privacy Commissioner and delegate of the Secretary

2. The 'Research Organisation' is the organisation administering the funds for the project and able to approve release of funds (i.e., in Service Agreements the research organisation is DCJ; in Research Agreements the research organisation is the external researcher's Institution)

Appendix 6: POCLS report submission checklist

POCLS Report Submission Checklist completed by the lead researcher. Please complete this checklist and submit by email with your report to the POCLS team for technical review: Pathways@facs.nsw.gov.au

Title of report and author(s):

Analyses are carried out as proposed in the approved Data Analysis Plan (DAP), if not an explanation has been submitted with the report. Note, amendments should have been agreed to by the Chief Investigator during the analysis stage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research questions set up in the DAP are addressed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about the POCLS participants included in the analysis (e.g., n, %) is provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
How any subsets of data were selected and whether/what cases were excluded are clearly described	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cohorts are described correctly (especially for caseworker and teacher surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information is provided about whether weighted or unweighted data was use. If weighted data was used, whether the complex survey option in the statistical software was used when performing statistical tests	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report correctly describes the POCLS variables (e.g., actual variable names) used in the study, including standardised measures and their use	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report provides adequate information (including syntax) about derived variables and how they were derived/computed (either in the methodology section or in the appendix)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report provides adequate description of statistical analyses used in the study, including details of analytical/ modelling approach. For example, ordinary least squares (OLS), maximum likelihood (ML) or restricted maximum likelihood (REML) estimation	<input type="checkbox"/>
All data and results in the report have been quality assured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data in the report have been validated against data books, published figures, or differences explained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small n's in the results are checked and comply with the small n guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Figures in the text are aligned with tables/charts	<input type="checkbox"/>
All tables/charts in the main report are referenced in text	<input type="checkbox"/>
Findings are aligned with other relevant published POCLS reports, or differences explained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limitations of analysis are included	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate acknowledgements are included	<input type="checkbox"/>
The representativeness and generalisability of the results are appropriately discussed	<input type="checkbox"/>
The version of the data sets, on which your report is based, is clearly stated, e.g., "This report is based on the December 2016 version of the POCLS Wave 1-3 unweighted data collected in face-to-face interviews with caregivers" etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
FACS template and style guides were followed in the write-up of the report	<input type="checkbox"/>
All co-authors reviewed and endorsed the submission of the report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would you be willing to share your syntax with other researchers? If yes, please copy your syntax file into the Syntax sharing folder within POCLS-Collaboration in SURE.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 7: POCLS technical review template

This review is undertaken by DCJ.

Project Title:

Manuscript title:

First author:

Reviewer:

Date:

<p>Data Analysis Plan (DAP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses carried out as proposed Research questions set up in DAP addressed 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA	<p>Comment:</p>
<p>POCLS population and methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mention of the POCLS Description of POCLS population Description of the POCLS methods/study design 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	<p>Comment:</p>
<p>POCLS Study participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the POCLS participants included in the analysis (e.g., n, %) Description of how any subsets of data were selected and whether/what cases were excluded Description of study cohorts (especially for caseworker and teacher surveys) Whether weighted or unweighted data was used. If weighted data, whether the complex survey option in the statistical software was used when performing statistical tests High level checks on totals to make sure correct (sub-) populations have been used 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	<p>Comment:</p>

<p>Study variables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the POCLS variables (e.g., using the actual variable names) used in the study including standardised measures and their use • Description of derived variables and how they were derived/computed (either in the methodology section or in the appendix). Syntax on how variables were derived could be provided in the appendix 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	<p>Comment:</p>
<p>Linkage data</p> <p>Description of linkage for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked data-CHeReL • MBS and PBS data 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p>Comment:</p>
<p>Statistical analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of statistical analyses used in the study, including details of significance testing and/or analytical/ modelling approach • For example, what regression models were constructed and what procedures were used in the models? Was ordinary least squares (OLS), maximum likelihood (ML) or restricted maximum likelihood (REML) estimation used? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	<p>Comment:</p>
<p>Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of results, including compliance with small n guidelines • Discussion about representativeness and generalisability of the findings • Figures in text are aligned with tables/charts • All tables/charts in the main report are referenced in text • Findings are aligned with other relevant published POCLS reports, or differences are explained 	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	<p>Comment:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings are aligned with relevant, non-published POCLS analysis undertaken by FACSIAR • Limitations of analysis included • Any potentially contentious issues in the paper 		
Acknowledgements POCLS acknowledgements	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct/appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not correct/appropriate	Comment:

2. Comments

I have the following comments to make on the technical aspects of data from the POCLS Study:

Overall recommendation regarding technical elements of the paper:

Does the paper need to be re-reviewed by the POCLS team?

Yes. Please ensure changes are marked-up (tracked). Please provide one clean version and one tracked version for review.

No. If changes are required, please amend before submitting the paper for publication.

Contact for clarification of any of the above review:

Important notes:

This review covers technical aspects of the POCLS and does not constitute peer-review or review by FACS policy/program areas.

Papers using the record linkage data (including MBS and PBS data) must also be reviewed by the relevant data custodians. Before submitting for publication, please ensure that you have received approval to publish from the data custodian(s).

Paper to be forwarded to the data custodian(s). Next meeting date (if known): . This is the responsibility of the author of the report.

Papers must also be reviewed by the AH&MRC HREC and have approval to publish. This is the responsibility of the DCJ research team.

Appendix 8: POCLS Publication Policy and Peer Review Template

Type of publication:

- Research report
- Technical report
- Brief
- PPT
- Journal article
- Other specify _____

Type of review:

- Peer review
- Policy/program area review
- POCLS team review
- Aboriginal stakeholders
- Other specify _____

Reviewer's name and position: _____

Page	Specific text (if any)	Comments from the reviewer	Response from the author

Review

- Good reporting and analysis of results
- Conclusions are supported by the evidence presented
- Well written (organisations and style)
- Useful for policy, program or practitioners

Low score

High Score

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Overall comments

[TEXT]

Recommendation

- Accept
- Accept with minor revisions
- Consider again after major revision
- Reject

Date of review:

Return by email to the POCLS Project Manager: Pathways@facs.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 9: Evidence to Action – what are the key applications of the results to policy and programs template

< Title of Project/report>

< Author(s) >

Permanency Support Program vision and objective

- Reduction in entries and re-entries into care - Maintain more children and young people at home safely with their birth parents, minimising entries and re-entries into care
- Increased exits out of care via permanency - Find permanent homes for children and young people currently in care by increasing the number of children and young people either being restored to their family, moving into guardianship, or adopted within two years of placement
- Better quality support in care - Invest in higher quality support for children and young people in care, with their safety and wellbeing being the paramount objectives

What is the policy problem

- < insert >
- < insert >
- < insert >

Findings to inform policy and practice

< insert approximately 300 words>

Implications for policy and practice

(e.g., new legislation, administrative data, policy, mandates, services/models, tools/frameworks, training and/or new research.

< insert dot points approx. 300 words>

Appendix 10: POCLS Publication Series

The POCLS webpage is the clearinghouse for all POCLS publications or links to journal articles based on the POCLS data. The final report should include a summary of the project that explains the research questions, analytical methods, the most significant findings, a summary of the research outcomes from the project, and a section on the implications for policy, practice or training.

The POCLS has several report templates and it is expected that researchers commissioned by DCJ to undertake analysis will deliver the final report in the correct template unless another arrangement is agreed for example published in a peer review journal. It is anticipated external researchers receiving in-kind support from DCJ to access the POCLS data will be publishing in peer reviewed journals.

The POCLS publication series consists of the following:

Research report (orange series)

- Length and purpose: 30-60 page report presenting research findings
- Content: Abstract, research aims and objectives, literature review, study overview, data sources and methodology, in depth analyses of primary or secondary data, description of research results, discussion of findings, and policy and practice implications
- Statistical reports are part of the research report series and provide a high level overview of the data collection by the different sources (child, carer, caseworker, teacher, linkage) and published at the first release of the data for each collection. Longitudinal collections only have only one baseline statistical report and data from subsequent waves will be presented in a number of other products: data books, interactive dashboards, research briefs, journal articles and research reports.

Evidence to action note or research brief (orange series)

- Length and purpose: up to 10 pages presenting key findings and implications for policy and practice from Research Reports
- Content: Focus on single/specific topics and questions of interest, learnings, implications of findings, practice linkages (depending on the topic), 'where to next', links to further information.

Technical report (purple series)

- Length and purpose: up to 30 page report presenting technical information to support analysis of POCLS data

- Content: Rationale/outline of the report, methodology, analyses and discussion, and implications/recommendations. Technical reports contain information to support research methods and analysis. Technical reports do not present research findings. Study design, data user guides, data dictionaries, questionnaires and data user training will be published in this series.

Data documentation (blue series)

- Purpose: Provide an overview of the data and variables available in all the POCLS datasets
- Content: Questionnaires, data dictionaries, and data books containing frequency and cross tabulation tables of all the variables in each collection: child/carer face-to-face interview (W1,2,3,4,5), childcare/school teacher on-line survey, caseworker on-line survey, record linkage data (DCJ, AEDC, ROD, NAPLAN, Health) and all other future collections. The data books are only available to approved researchers in SURE because they contain small counts and no interpretation of results. The main purpose of the data books is verify the feasibility of the data analysis plan and as a check point for new analysis.

Newsletter (green series)

- Length and purpose: 4-6 pages providing an update on the study progress and results to study participants.
- Content: Study update, how the study is tracking, what we are hearing from participants, upcoming news.

Interactive dashboards

- Purpose: Online interactive dashboards will present key study data from all sources and all waves as released. The data will be presented by focus areas and allow users to access data by key characteristics of the sample e.g. placement type, cultural background, age group and District. The dashboards will be supplemented with written summaries that can be downloaded and printed.

POCLS PowerPoint and poster

- Purpose: POCLS presentations
- Content: Study background (acknowledgements, ethics, study aims, design, data sources), key research question, methods (keep brief unless a methods presentation), results/findings and policy and practice implications.

Peer reviewed journal articles

- Each journal has their own expectations. Links to all journal articles will be on the POCLS webpage.

Other products:

- Video recordings, podcasts, promotional brochures, fieldwork materials, business cards. When relevant, these will be uploaded to the study webpage.

Appendix 11: POCLS publication checklist

Name of the project: _____

Lead Researcher: _____

Task	Date completed
Application (Template - Appendix 3)	
Application received	
Feedback on the feasibility and scope (Template - Appendix 4)	
Aboriginal focus – Yes / No	
Application endorsed – Yes/ No	
Relevant HRECs notified of new personnel	
DCJ & SURE Agreements executed	
Researchers notify relevant data custodians about the project as per the POCLS Technical Report Number 15: Guidelines for Using Record Linkage Data	
Data user training	
Completed	
Aboriginal focus – Yes / No	
OOHC expert nominated & monitoring plan agreed to	
Completed	
Aboriginal focus – Yes / No	
Technical review (Appendix 6, 7)	
POCLS research team	
Data custodians of administrative data	
Reviewer’s feedback provided to all co-authors before resubmission	
Content review (Appendix 8)	
POCLS research team	

External peer review for commissioned work only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Blind review – Yes / No ○ Aboriginal focus – Yes / No 	
AH&MRC HREC committee approval to publish	
Collated feedback to Chief Investigator	
All feedback sent to lead author (cc co-authors) for review and resubmission	
Final manuscript	
Researchers addressed reviewer’s feedback in template and final manuscript (Appendix 8)	
Final publication approved by co-authors to resubmit	
Policy and program applications template received (Appendix 8)	
Report provided in POCLS publication template (Appendix 10) unless being published in peer review journal. Authorship and acknowledgements appropriate	
Preparation for publishing	
Proof reading	
Typeset	
ISBN	
Approval to publish	
BN to Deputy Secretary for publishing approval noting written approval by relevant data custodians, AH&MRC HREC and Aboriginal reference group endorsement (if relevant)	
Publication uploaded to POCLS webpage.	
Close Project within 2 months of approval to publish (Appendix 11)	
Analysts archived project materials	
Research/Service Agreement closed	
SURE Workspace closed	

