



**National Childcare
Accreditation Council Inc.**

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Spot Check Evaluation Form Analysis

Spot Checks Conducted July / August 2008

This is the first year that the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) has conducted an analysis of the *Spot Check Evaluation Forms* received from services that have had a Spot Check. The *Spot Check Evaluation Forms* demonstrate the satisfaction of services participating in the Child Care Quality Assurance (CCQA) systems with Spot Checks.

The results of this analysis inform Validator feedback and NCAC processes of continuing improvement. This assists in the revision of the standards of quality care, developments in the administration of the CCQA systems and the provision of resources to services, families, Validators and other key stakeholders.

Spot Checks July / August 2008

NCAC is responsible for the administration of the following CCQA systems:

- Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) for family day care schemes
- Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance (OSHCQA) for outside school hours care services
- Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) for long day care centres

NCAC conducts unannounced Spot Checks to ensure that the quality of care provided by child care services is maintained between Validation Visits. All services Accredited by NCAC are eligible to receive a Spot Check. A service may receive more than one Spot Check during its Accreditation period.

During July and August 2008, 505 Spot Checks were completed. NCAC received *Spot Check Evaluation Forms* from 60% of those services which had a Spot Check during this period, as follows:

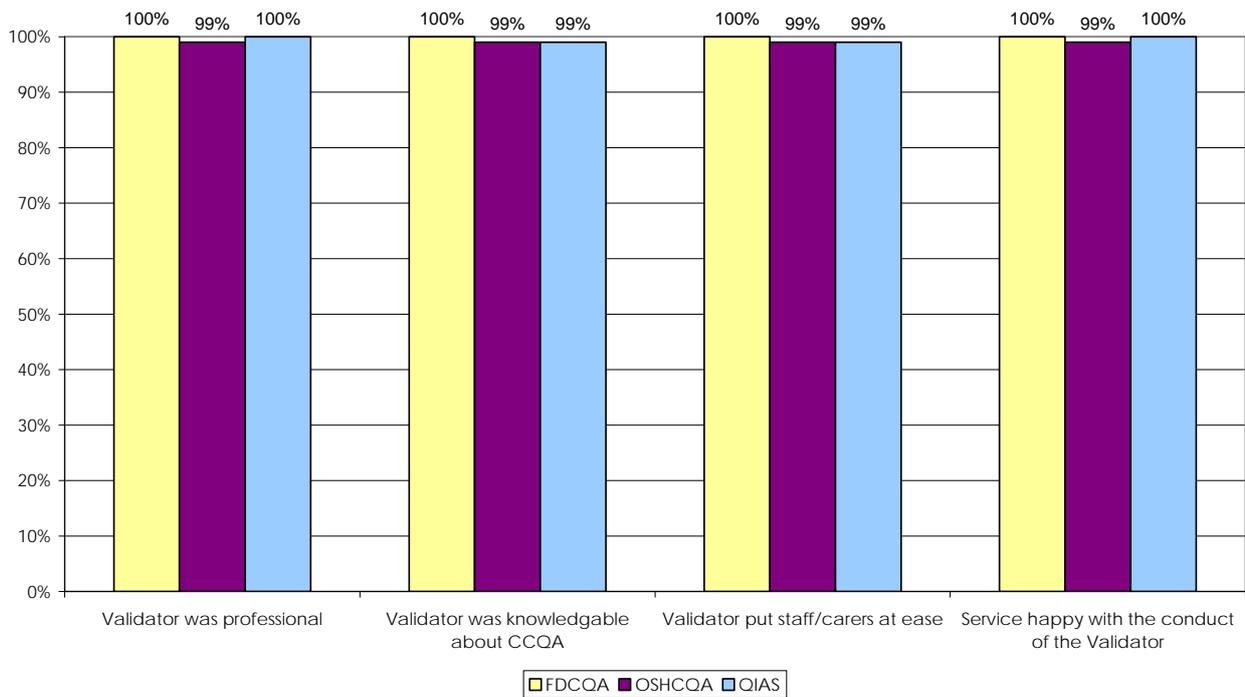
Spot Checks: 1 July 2008 – 30 August 2008			
	Spot Checks completed	<i>Spot Check Evaluation Forms</i> received	Percentage received
FDCQA	8	8	100%
OSHCQA	206	114	55%
QIAS	291	179	62%
Total	505	301	60%

The following report summarises the responses collected from all *Spot Check Evaluation Forms* returned by services that received a Spot Check during July and August 2008. It demonstrates that the vast majority of services participating in the CCQA systems had positive Spot Check experiences.

Perceptions of the Validator

Services were asked to rate the performance of their Validator across a number of areas. On average, over a range of measures of the Validator's performance, more than 99% of child care services indicated that they were satisfied with the performance of the Validator (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Performance of the Validator



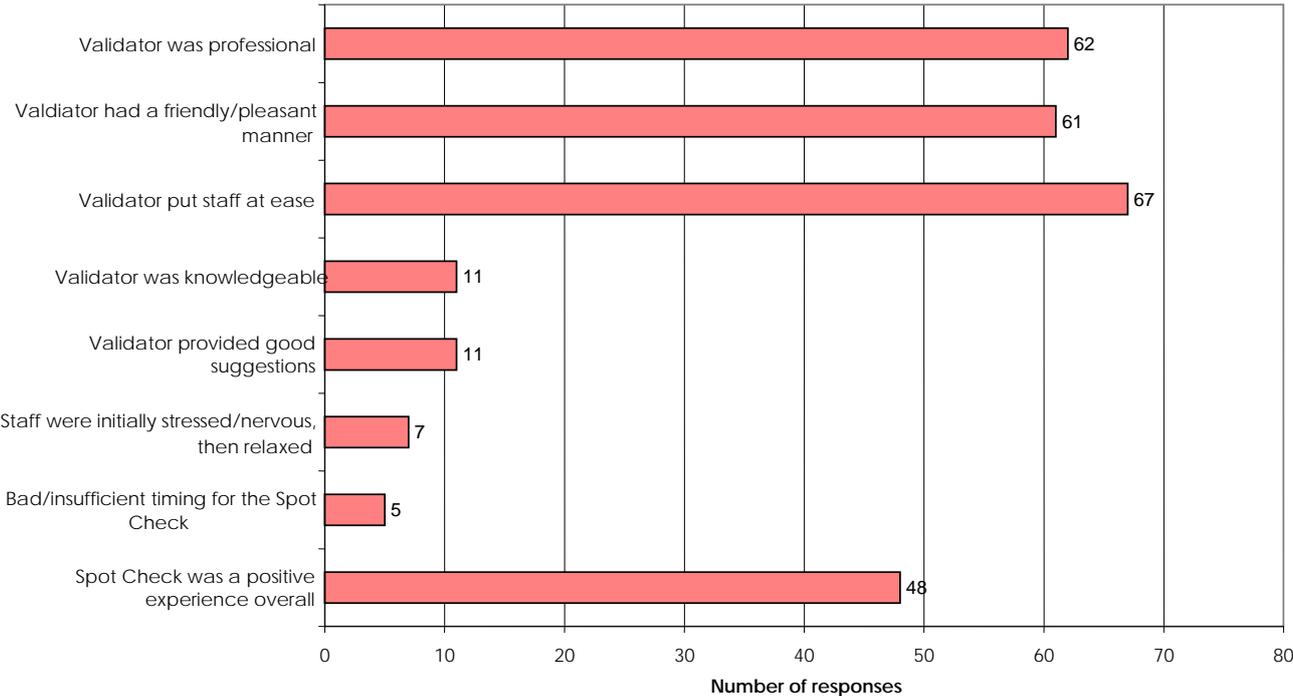
Service comments about the Spot Check and the performance of the Validator

Services were also asked to provide additional comments or feedback about the Spot Check and/or the performance of the Validator (Figure 2). Responses have been categorised and combined due to the similarity in the responses received.

Key Trends:

- 5 family day care schemes (71%) provided additional comments and feedback.
 - 100% of this feedback was positive.
- 72 outside school hours care services (63%) provided additional comments and feedback.
 - 95% of this feedback was positive.
- 100 long day care centres (56%) provided additional comments and feedback.
 - 92% of this feedback was positive.

Figure 2: Comments regarding the Spot Check and the performance of the Validator



Positive Feedback about the Spot Check and the performance of the Validator

The following section provides a sample of some of the positive feedback received from services about their Spot Check and/or the performance of the Validator.

Family day care

SF211: *We were extremely pleased with our Spot Visit. The Validator was very professional and very pleasant. She made us feel comfortable by explaining the expectations of the spot visit and the steps.*

SF210: *The Validator assisted scheme staff and carer to feel very relaxed. This has been our first spot check and we now feel very confident with the process.*

SF208: *The spot check was conducted in a relaxed and professional manner. All staff and care providers that came into contact with the Validator felt at ease. The visit was unobtrusive and practical.*

Outside school hours care

SC1600: *We felt at ease with the Validator and her visit did not interrupt our program in any way. She was friendly and put staff and students' needs first.*

SC1559: *The Validator was pleasant and professional, putting staff at ease. This made for an enjoyable and relaxed visit.*

SC1012: *Validator put everyone at ease during her visit. She interacted with staff and the children. Any points the Validator wanted to make were clear, also taking into account the context of our program.*

SC1545: *We were very happy with our Validator. She was professional, friendly, explained the process clearly and was not intrusive. As you can imagine, we were a bit anxious at the idea of someone suddenly observing our centre but the process was fine and our fears subsided quickly. It was a worthwhile process to undergo as it assured the staff that we are doing the right thing.*

Long day care

SQ1696: *The Validator acted in a professional manner and tried to put the staff at ease during the visit. She asked questions where necessary and was extremely open to the unique challenges of the setting.*

SQ1535: *Our Validator was very professional and polite. She put the staff at ease as she observed them. She was asking a variety of staff questions about our service and our procedures and offered helpful advice and her ideas to our staff to continue to improve our service.*

SQ1581: *The Validator was very professional on her visit. She also made staff comfortable as she explained the process initially then during her checking processes she positioned herself well, putting staff at ease. Managed to ask a few questions and she answered with smiles, which made it comfortable. She assured us that NCAC is always contactable for any queries about child care practices.*

SQ1643: *Staff felt at ease with the Validator and she was warm and friendly. The process was smooth and staff feel happy with our results and the opportunity to improve our service.*

Negative Feedback about the Spot Check and the performance of the Validator

The following section contains all negative feedback received about the Spot Check and/or the performance of the Validator.

Family day care

No negative responses received.

Outside school hours care

SC1483: *Validator did not engage with staff. Merely sat and watched.*

Long day care

SQ1761: *As with most centres we have a 'no hat no play' policy in place. During the Spot Check the Validator was in the play yard with our staff and children but did not wear a hat! Please remind Validators to carry a hat when visiting.*

SQ1296: *There was limited time to observe typical practice.*

SQ1682: *Aware that Validator did not wear hat whilst in outdoor play area.*

SQ1592: *A few issues brought up were seen by the Validator only, when asked where I could comment on the issues raised I was told that I only needed to sign all issues she made have now been amended accordingly.*

SQ1498: *When children approached the Validator, staff felt she was unprofessional in her comments.*

SQ1706: *On previous visits from NCAC staff, my staff have felt at ease with the Validator chatting to them. This Validator stood watching not engaging. When she did engage staff, they felt uneasy as if being questioned.*

SQ1683: *(The Validator) was very approachable and put the staff at ease. Would have been nice for her to role model sun safe hat whilst outside.*

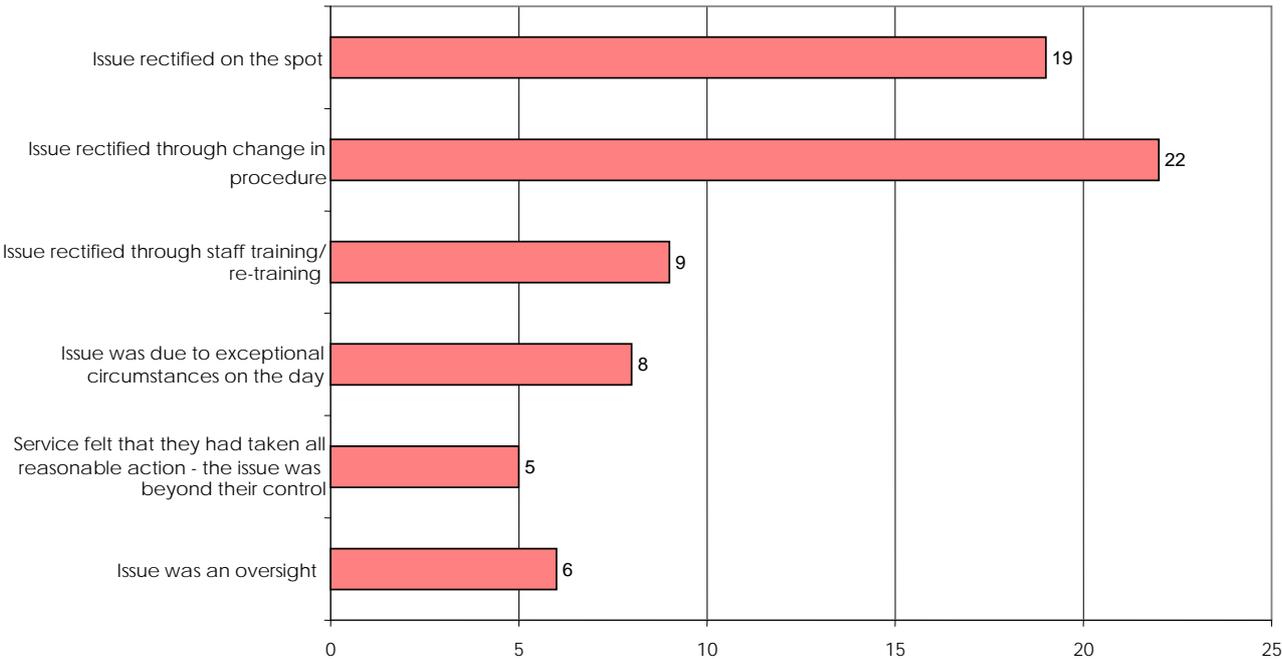
Comments on practices identified as not meeting the Accreditation Standard

Services were also asked to provide additional comments on practices identified as not meeting the standard required for Accreditation during the Spot Check (Figure 3). Responses received were specific to the practice identified, and did not comment more broadly on the Spot Check process. The low response rate reflects the fact that many services did not have any practices identified as meeting the Accreditation standard. Responses have been categorised and combined due to the similarity in the responses received.

Key Trends

- 1 family day care scheme (14%) provided comment.
- 35 outside school hours care services (31%) provided comment.
- 67 long day care centres (37%) provided comment.

Figure 3: Comments on practices identified as not meeting the Accreditation standard



NCAC support for stakeholders

NCAC consistently seeks the views of the child care community about all aspects of CCQA. The constructive feedback provided by child care services on their *Spot Check Evaluation Form* informs Validator feedback and the development of resources to support services, families and other stakeholders.

Support for services provided in response to the feedback from *Spot Check Evaluation Forms* includes:

- Continuing improvement of Validator Training, to ensure greater consistency and objectivity.
- The publication of articles in *Putting Children First*, NCAC's quarterly newsletter, to assist services as they progress through quality assurance, covering issues such as unannounced Spot Checks, inclusion and professional support for services, policy development and NCAC support and resources for services.
- The development of resources, such as *Factsheets*, to assist services with issues identified in the *Spot Check Evaluation Forms*.