

# **Sowing the seeds of innovation: exploring strategies for sustaining the spread of innovative approaches in child and family work**

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This paper reports on a study that utilised Roger's Diffusion of Innovation (DoI) theory to examine the evolution of innovative child and family support strategies within a single human service organisation and the processes involved in the transplanting of similar innovations more broadly across Australia. In doing so, understanding was sought on the stages through which innovations pass, including exposure to their existence, characteristics of that allow for the formation of favourable attitudes, the nature of organisational decisions involved in adoption or adaptation, contexts that may influence commitment and ways of working. A case study analysis of seven child and family support approaches within one organisation was achieved via document analysis and iterative interviewing of current and past employees. External organisations were surveyed to identify those with similar approaches and were followed up with semi-structured interviews. Information was sought about the stages by which their innovations were introduced, implemented and sustained, including the characteristics of innovations that may have nurtured organisational commitment towards them. It was hoped that, equipped with these understandings, that ideas could be generated that help to facilitate the spread and sustainability of strategies in child and family work.