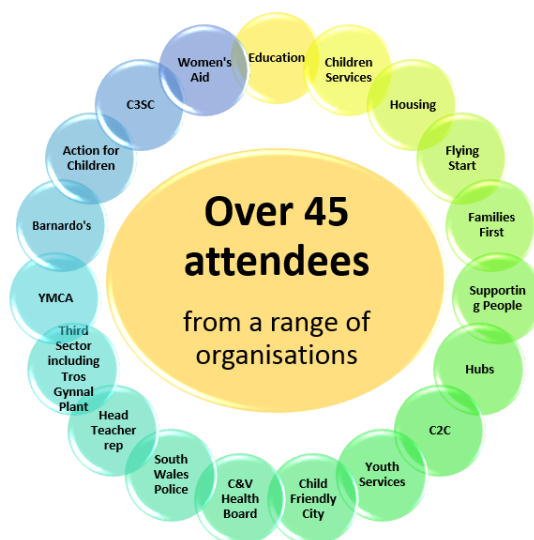


Workshop: Family Help and Support in Cardiff

Introduction

On the 24th September 2018, a large multi-agency workshop took place with the aim of setting out a proposed delivery model for integrated early help and prevention services for families and children.

The workshop was facilitated by the Institute of Public Care (IPC) and was very well attended with over 45 people representing various organisations across Cardiff.



To set the scene for the workshop, various people presented to provide detail on why and how we are reviewing our current arrangements, as well as providing some early findings. It also included the proposed high-level future approach that included the creation of 3 new services.

- **Family Gateway** - Primary route in for all referrals and requests for help
- **Family Help Service** - Rapid response to families needing short term intervention
- **Family Support Service** - To work with families facing more complex or severe issues

Based on these three services, attendees were then given the opportunity in small groups to discuss each of the services in turn while answering the following questions.

- What are the strengths?
- What are your concerns?
- How can we address any concerns?

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Key Findings – Overarching Themes

There was a lot of positive support throughout the different groups for this model and agreement that it could have a very successful impact on the lives of many families in Cardiff. In addition, the consensus was that the benefits would be far reaching for many of the organisations that were at the workshop.

Many strengths and concerns crossed over. Some areas were identified as critical to the success of the model and that, if done correctly, would be a strength, there were concerns however that if not done correctly this could impact on the service. The task worked well because then it gave all attendees an opportunity to make suggestions on how to address these concerns so that these critical areas could be implemented successfully.

Some of the overarching themes that were discussed throughout the 3 new services were:

Workforce Development: A key theme that came through was that the model could only be as successful as the staff delivering it. Staff at each part of the model would need to be highly skilled and there would need to be a comprehensive training package in place that would need to be fully supported. This would include; ensuring ease of access to appropriate services, a complimentary IT system and a manageable workload.

Performance / Resource Management: The level of resources in each of the services was unknown at the time of the event and this posed some concerns that the potential level would not meet the demand levels. A full performance framework is required to not only monitor how well demand is being met, but also to determine what is working and having an impact on families.

Engagement: This was twofold with, concerns about families engaging with each aspect of the model, but also ensuring that professionals engage with the model and have the reassurance that families will be supported.

Detail Development of the Model: Linked to the above, it was raised that it is crucial that as the model develops and becomes operational, continued engagement should be sought from a range of stakeholders, including Children and Young People, Schools, Police (PSCO's) and the Third Sector Partners.

Threshold Levels: The detail on the threshold levels and who would get what level service was considered important also that throughout the model there should be a seamless service for the family.

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Specific Themes – Gateway

Strengths

There were lots of positive comments on the gateway aspect of this model and the key theme coming through mainly concurred that this model would **simplify the current arrangements and would be clear and accessible**. It was also felt that it would be clear for professionals and families on where to go and that there would be ease of access when they do. This linked in well with the opportunity to promote/market the service with all potential users, which in turn would lead to the positive of self-referrals.

Not only was the accessibility of the gateway seen as a strength, but also that it will provide a **clear pathway** into other services and the support to navigate those resources. This was especially thought to be the case in terms of the focus on building positive partnerships with the third sector. The view was also that this would enable better use of available resources by giving the appropriate level of service for the needs of the family.

In terms of the operation of the gateway itself, there were positive comments in relation to the inclusion of **safeguarding oversight and support by social workers** and that it will be consistent with the signs of safety approach. Further positive comments were received on the ability of this Gateway to seamlessly align and **refer to other Gateways** currently in operation.

In addition, the ability to **manage demand** through the gateway will enable us **to improve monitoring and understand the needs** of people presenting in Cardiff. This will also enable us to quality assure, understand what interventions work and inform future commissioning.

Concerns and how these can be addressed

A key concern was that the referrer needs **confidence in the gateway and reassurance** their referrals will be acted on appropriately. Part of the solution identified was to build in some type of feedback into the system so that the referrer knows what has happened as a result of their referral.

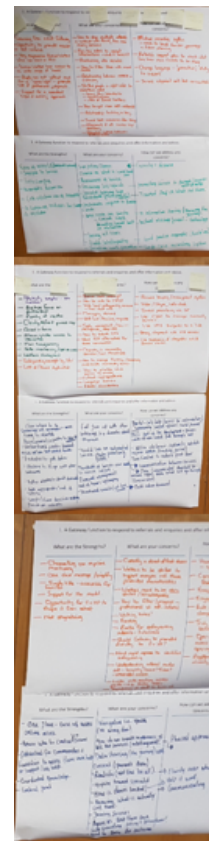
Another key concern was ensuring the staff had the **skill level and the right training** to be able to support everyone coming through the gateway. It was thought that the learning from the integrated adult services model could help inform the recruitment and training.

Highlighted was the need (when further developing the service) to seek the views of families especially the **voice of the child/young person** in ensuring their needs are captured. Within this development phase, the opportunity to involve Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) was raised, as they have a crucial role to play in the overall model.

Concerns were also raised about the **long-term funding** of the service and also its ability to meet all the demand, especially reacting to **safeguarding concerns in a timely manner**. It was noted that strong performance management would need to be put in place, both operational in terms of response times, but also to provide the evidence of the impact that the service is having.

Additionally, there were some practical concerns/solutions that attendees thought needed consideration for the service to work. These included

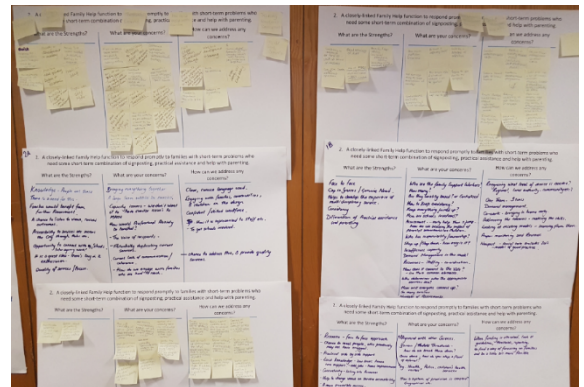
- Having a Freephone Number
- Opening Times for when the service is needed / Appropriate out of hours messaging
- Including a face to face service
- Language barriers
- Portal/Automated Service – self-help (access to information)
- Seeking consent for referrals and need for compliance with GDPR



Specific Themes – Family Help

Strengths

On this aspect of the service, there was again a lot of positive comments and it was felt there was a genuine need for the service to be provided. This was most prevalent in having people to assist as well as simply signposting, especially to provide **practical help** in a range of areas. This included low-level parenting, housing advice and connecting with community-based programmes.



The Family Help Service would be able to provide a proportionate response to family's needs and have the potential to help those who have previously not engaged with services. It was also felt that the Family Help Service would be able to connect to schools.

Concerns and how these can be addressed

A key area of concern was how this team would get **families to engage** from the outset and there were quite a few ways that this could be overcome. Namely by:

- engaging with families, communities and children in the design
- getting schools involved
- encouraging the referrer to begin the process of engaging and sell the service to the families

Another key area of concern centred on the overall **availability of the service** and this included question on

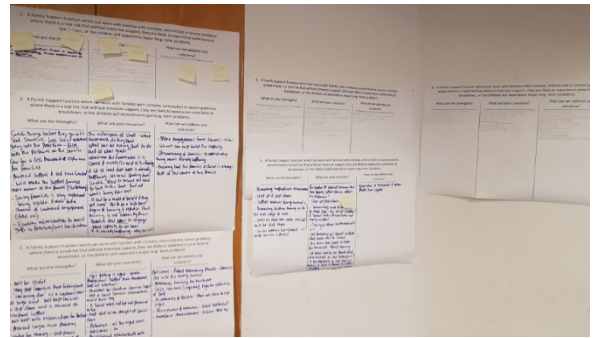
- how many staff
- are they centrally or locality-based
- where will the service be delivered
- caseload capacity
- demand management – and anticipating the number of referrals the team will need to deal with

Again, concerns about training and ensuring that staff were appropriately trained and supported was raised. In addition to the points covered previously, it was raised that the co-location with the Gateway and the Family Help Team would improve understanding of each other's roles.

Specific Themes - Family Support

Strengths

A key strength of the Family Support Team was that (in addition to providing initial **crisis intervention**) they would be able to provide **longer periods of support**. During this time, they would be able to work with the **whole family** in a range of evidence-based interventions.



The Family Support Team would be able to help families **step down** from Children's Services and (in comparison to preventative work which would take time to see a positive impact), this would have an immediate impact.

There was a lot of support for this element and the consensus was that getting this right would prove value for money. It was further felt that the impact of helping people before they reach crisis would help a lot of different areas.

Concerns and how these can be addressed

There were similar concerns to the Family Help Team **around resources** and ensuring that it is the right level to **meet the demand**. Plus, ensuring the **right skills** and **level of training** is in place for staff delivering this service.

Specific concerns about this team and the **links to Children Services** were made in relation to

- the level of children's services involvement
- that this is social work, but shouldn't look/feel like that to families
- not using this service as an as an overspill of Social Care

The use of data was raised as crucial and this was not just data sharing between professionals but also robust monitoring to look at family's entering and exiting to measure improvement.