

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2011

INTEGRATED WORKING IN WILTSHIRE

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on progress being made in Wiltshire to implement and embed use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Lead Professional which are part of Integrated Working.

Background

2. The Common Assessment Framework is a standard national assessment framework for use by all children & young people's services, using a prescribed standard form. It does not replace any existing assessments. The framework provides a series of headings ("assessment factors") which act as a checklist to ensure that all aspects of a child or young person's needs are considered. A series of short videos, entitled 'Introduction to CAF', can be viewed on the Wiltshire Pathways website (www.wiltshirepathways.org).
3. Completion of a CAF assessment, which can only be undertaken with the agreement of the parents and/or young person, involves collating information from a range of sources – the child or young person, the family and services to which the child or young person is known. The aim is to identify unmet need and then to set out an action plan for meeting that need. The nature of action required will depend on the severity and complexity of need. The required co-ordination of actions may be achieved through the CAF Action Plan and a Lead Professional may be required in order to achieve it.
4. The responsibilities of the Lead Professional are:
 - To hold a copy of a completed CAF form for the child or young person, including an up-to-date Action Plan
 - To help co-ordinate the provision of services in accordance with the Action Plan
 - To contribute to those services as appropriate
 - To act as a point of contact for the family and for other professionals involved with the family
 - To monitor for any changes in the child's needs, review and update the Action Plan and provide or refer for additional services if required.

5. The best person to act as Lead Professional will be the person with the necessary skills, who is familiar with the needs of the child or young person and who has a good relationship with them and their family. The workers most likely to undertake the role of Lead Professional at level 2 are:
 - Midwives
 - Early Years
 - Children's Centres
 - Health Visitors
 - School Nurses
 - School staff
 - Education Welfare Officers
 - (Connexions) Personal Advisers
 - Youth development workers
 - College staff
6. There is a CAF team within the Council which provides guidance and support to practitioners across the County when completing a CAF, and support the Lead professional. The CAF coordinators chair "team around the child meetings" and support and encourage other practitioners to fulfil this role. They link closely with Extended Services by supporting the Implementation of the Multi-agency Forums. A duty system is operated to provide advice, guidance and information about accessing resources. They register CAFs and respond to queries about whether a CAF has been completed and who the Lead Professional is.
7. In July 2008 the Joint Area Review (JAR) recognised that CAF was not sufficiently embedded in Wiltshire (only 76 CAFs had been completed) and the subsequent Annual Performance Assessment (APA) letter which followed confirmed this. The interface between social care and CAF was also identified as an area of development during the Unannounced Inspection of Social Care which took place in July 2010.

Main Considerations for the Council

8. Since the last update to the Children's Services Select Committee in January 2010 there has been a continued effort to drive forward the Integrated Working agenda in Wiltshire.
9. A programme of multi agency integrated working training sessions is being delivered. The training programme is composed of 4 modules. An E-Learning module is available which covers the basic principles of CAF, Lead professional and information sharing. A total of 632 people have accessed this e-training. More detailed face to face training is available and 308 people attended this year. Evaluations of the training programmes have been hugely positive and included below are some comments from training sessions.

- *Excellent course – well informed trainers, now have knowledge of CAF, well presented and pace was just right*
 - *More clear on what happens to start and review CAFs*
 - *Feel more confident in what is offered and how it works*
 - *It has increased my awareness and reduced my anxieties*
 - *Much better understanding of CAF process and roles*
 - *I'm not going to run away from CAF anymore*
 - *Thank-you for helping me feel more confident*
10. Further development of CAF is being shaped through an Integrated Processes Group which brings together representatives from Social Care, Primary and Secondary schools, Targeted services, Voluntary Sector, Early years, Police and Health, to progress the integrated working agenda at a strategic level.
11. To date (Dec 2010) 1000 CAFs have been registered and statistics show the range of agencies involved in completing CAFs as-well as the geographical areas where establishment of the process is more embedded.
12. A number of protocols have been agreed with agencies including Health visitors, Early years and draft protocols with Social care and Teenage pregnancy outlining the use of CAF within their processes. These are now being reviewed to ensure they are up to date and to ensure that relevant practitioners are aware.
13. In April 2010 guidance to schools on the use of CAF to access Targeted services was agreed. This meant that a CAF assessment was necessary to access Targeted services. It was felt that a holistic assessment of the child/young person's needs rather than just focusing on the presenting need would result in more effective identification and interventions for young people. There has been some difficulty in implementing this process mainly for schools who feel that it is a laborious process when they know what the need is e.g. referral to speech & Language. However many colleagues from the provider services feel that a more holistic assessment has resulted in a better understanding of the child's needs and an awareness of other issues which may impact on the presenting issue or on the identified action plan which they previously would have been unaware of. There is now agreement to review and revise this process and to ensure that schools have quicker access to support services where it is clear that a single service is needed. There are also plans to put in place a system of locality resource allocation panels to ensure that where a CAF is completed, there is an appropriate response from front line services.
14. In the Autumn, stronger links were established with Social care resulting in CAF coordinators spending structured time in the teams to discuss families where social care intervention is terminating and to ensure where appropriate that services at level 2 will be provided. Discussion also

centres on high level 2 cases which may not meet Social care thresholds but which need intervention.

15. Service user and practitioner feedback highlights the benefits of a holistic assessment which in many cases has identified needs not previously known to professionals. This has therefore resulted in more effective and timely support being given to a family. Two DVDs have been produced involving practitioners and a service user - a CAF film describing how it is used and the benefits it can offer and a series of integrated working mini films.
16. Further work is planned to extend the use of CAF and ensure it benefits children and young people. This includes:-
 - Developing a more efficient system for Team around the Child meetings
 - Improving agency engagement both in completion of CAFs and undertaking the role of Lead Professional
 - Working with agencies to improve the communication & flow of information
 - Resolving resources issues and linking to strategic commissioning
 - Revise the CAF processes to include a method for evaluating and reviewing outcomes including family feedback & involvement in development of the service.

Proposal

17. For the Children's Services Select Committee to note the progress made in respect of implementing CAF & Lead Professional across Wiltshire.

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Background documents - None