2018 ESN’s Integrated Support Working Group Meeting: Children and Families

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There are a number of terms used to describe integrated working – partnership working, joint-working, multi- and inter-disciplinary - often used interchangeably but they do not necessarily have the same meaning (Percy-Smith, 2005; Sloper, 2004).

Brown and White (2006) suggest that the absence of a clearly defined concept is problematic – not least for evaluation.
Why we need closer working

- The multi-dimensional nature of many families’ problems
- Access to expertise in working with families with particular needs
- Need to make most effective use of resources
But ...

As well as a lack of clarity over meaning of integrated working with wide variety of terms used to describe it

It takes time to achieve and to evidence outcomes and policy drivers change

Integrated working is but one of many influences – and far more research on barriers (and perceptions) than outcomes
Outcomes for children and families (1)

1. Limited evidence of effectiveness between service integration and child and family outcomes
2. There is stronger evidence in relation to high quality pre-school provision
3. School-based integrated working and measurable improvements
4. Improved gains in academic attainment and engagement
Some evidence that multi-agency approaches reduce youth offending, improve school attendance, reduce alcohol consumption and anti-social behaviour.

Studies show positive impact of integrated working on children with disabilities or poor mental health.

Collaboration between social workers and school staff → positive outcomes
Outcomes for professionals and agencies

- Integrated working is associated with improved enjoyment and well-being
- Improved knowledge and understanding of other professional roles
- Increased opportunities for personal, career and skill development
- Improved information sharing and communication between professionals and agencies
- More effective coordination of services
- Earlier identification of need
Caution

• No evidence of reduced workloads

• Some confusion about professional identity and risk of marginalising social work in health settings

• Variability in progress towards embedding integrated working in practice

• Limited evidence for the cost effectiveness of integrated working

• Limited evidence on outcomes of inter-professional training on practice (or on outcomes for children and families)
A man's feet should be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.

George Santayana
28 responses to survey from...
Responses from...
21 services described in the survey with focus on:

- Children and young people
- Families
- Professionals
Teams providing services with an element of integration managed by....
Integrated processes involve
What we are talking about
Most activity

Integration and collaboration
- Health
- Education
- Police

Co-ordination and awareness
- Employment
- Justice

Limited involvement
- Housing
Key drivers

- Develop preventative approaches
- Improve outcomes
- New policy / legislation
- Additional pressures on services
- Breakdown barriers
- Improve continuity between services
Policies and legislation

General and specific laws

Policies
  - Agency specific
  - Group specific

Models
  - Targetted
‘Integrated’ support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where it is happening</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Family centres</td>
<td>Local projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s homes</td>
<td>Expert /dedicated agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>In cases</td>
<td>Protocols and high level plans</td>
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<td>In meetings</td>
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<td>Education and Children’s</td>
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<td>Social Care</td>
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What it means in practice (1)
Information sharing: most commonly in education and police

Joint case management: most commonly in Justice and Police

Multi-disciplinary teams e.g. in family centres conducting family assessments and support to prevent entry into care

Co-location is most common in education, health and justice

Shared technology relatively rare but a few mentions in health and employment
Involvement of children and families
Funding

- 1 agency funds
- 2 or more agencies pool budgets
- Use of existing staff and funds
- Other
Management
What is needed for success?

- Commitment of stakeholders
- Leadership
- Learning and training
- Resources
Evaluation

- Information available for 21 projects
- 17 reported evaluations – internal v. external; range of methodologies and sizes
- 2 were planned and 2 were absent
- However most were data collection exercises, captured feedback. Need to evidence impact – or lack of
- Need rigorous evaluation of structures, particularly any evidence for the impact on child outcomes
Outcomes – limited evidence

- Perceptions
- Numbers that have accessed services
- Parental views and feedback
- Plans that (potentially) contain outcome data
Sustainability

Yes: 12
No: 1
Unsure: 1
No response: 1
Transferability

Yes - happened: [9]
Yes - planned: [2]
Yes - belief: [8]
Not sure: [1]
No response: [1]
Practices in detail

- 12 practices from 8 countries
- 2 from Belgium
- 2 from Spain
- 2 from Italy
- 2 from Sweden
- 1 from Finland, Hungary, Malta, and Portugal
Examples

(1)

- **Work closely** e.g. Progetto P.U.E.R.I. service for unaccompanied migrant minors

- **Co-ordination / collaboration** e.g. in Kronoberg this is between social services, health services, education and police to identify need and intervene early; in Galicia collaboration of multiple services to raise awareness about early intervention for children with developmental disorders
Examples

(2)

- **Intensive co-operation** e.g. in Ghent where social workers are placed in schools and in Malta where workers from different professions work together and learn from each other.

- **Integrated**: In Häme, social services, health services, and NGOs are based together in family centres and in Lisbon early childhood education and care (ECEC) services regarding services for children and families.
Examples of transferability – real and potential

- Models to support for vulnerable families are being considered for other contexts such as those in Ghent and Galicia
- Some pilots, such as the early years services in Navarra, have been developed with the intention of roll out
- Other initiatives like the Häme Family Centres are part of a larger national programme - sharing experiences across areas
- The pilot project for unaccompanied asylum seekers was considered to be appropriate for other European contexts
- The Kronoberg County had imported the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model from Scotland
outcomes in terms of families’ aspirations

link between agencies / processes and outcomes

impact of inter-professional training on professional practice and outcomes for children and families

comparable costs in relation to outcomes for children

Next steps? Examine .....
Some basic questions

• Why do we want integrated services and when and where do we want them? Assessing the problem and matching the solution....

• Is organisational integration necessary or sufficient?

• What conditions are needed to support different types of inter-professional working?

• What, if any, are the implications for the future structure of our workforces?

• What is the role of technology? organisational culture?