

<i>– EMPOWERING PRACTITIONERS AND PRACTICE INITIATIVE (EPPI)–</i>			
<u>Organisation(s):</u>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency		
<u>Country:</u>	Ireland		
<u>Contact Person:</u>	policy@esn-eu.org		
<u>Theme:</u>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ageing & Care <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum & Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Young People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children & Families <input type="checkbox"/> Community Care <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Production <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Homelessness </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Active Inclusion & Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Services <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Quality & Management <input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce Support <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum Income <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: </td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ageing & Care <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum & Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Young People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children & Families <input type="checkbox"/> Community Care <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Production <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Active Inclusion & Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Services <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Quality & Management <input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce Support <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum Income <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
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<u>Principles of European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Check the 20 principles here.</i>	Chapter I. Equal opportunities and access to the labour market Principle I. Education, training and life-long learning Principle 4. Active support to employment Chapter II. Fair working conditions Principle 9. Work-life balance Principle 11. Childcare and support to children		
<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept and design phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Execution & monitoring phase <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation phase <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Up and Transformation Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)		
<u>Social issues addressed</u> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve</i>	The drivers for change for the two projects in this proposal stem from the relentless scrutiny of the Agency in the media and frequent damning reports criticising Tusla’s practice failures which have resulted in continuous stress and pressure. This has had devastating consequences for staff on the ground resulting in low morale, increased workloads, burnout, and movement away from frontline child protection work. Recruitment and retention of staff is a key priority for the Agency, and there is an imperative to build capacity and resource frontline staff to build relationships with and undertake direct work with families. The Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative (EPPI) and the Practice Development and Improvement Project (PDIP) constitute a strategic response to the above issues.		

<p>Objectives: <i>Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and retention of staff in child protection as well as attracting students to the profession. • To develop evidence-using and evidence-informed practitioners in Tusla by increasing staff knowledge levels and confidence and improving the consistency and quality of practice across the Agency. • To develop the confidence and expertise of social workers so they achieve better outcomes by applying evidence and knowledge to their day-to-day practice.
<p>Activities: <i>Please summarise the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 200 words).</i></p>	<p>The Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative and the Practice Development and Improvement Project consist of active learning programmes, evidence-based practical tools and resources, and qualifying frameworks for students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The Evidence-Informed Practitioner Programme (EIPP)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional development programme designed to develop the confidence and expertise of frontline practitioners, so they achieve better outcomes by applying evidence and knowledge in their day-to-day practice. • The Programme employs an active learning approach: participants use live cases so that learning is applied immediately, complete a short literature review based on the theoretical underpinnings of the case and are allocated a mentor to support their development. 2. <u>The Evidence-Informed, Outcomes-Focused Toolkit</u> An online Toolkit for Tusla staff, located on the Agency's intranet, focuses on critical practice areas. Includes the best available evidence for areas of work along with practical tools and resources that practitioners can apply to their practice. A new section on Healthy Sexuality and Relationship Development for children and young people in care was added in 2021.
<p>Evaluation of practice: <i>Please explain how you evaluate the practice, and what the results were/are so far</i></p>	<p>A process evaluation of developing the Therapeutic Toolkit and the Evidence-Informed Practitioner Programme, which are the two core strands of the Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative have shown that an effective and successful project management approach was applied to developing EPPI, and the initiative is held in high regard by both the Toolkit users and the EIPP participants. There is a perception of positive impact on social workers, in that social workers feel better equipped to make evidence-informed decisions and provide positive outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>The evaluation depicts an approach combining robust project management techniques complemented by collaborative structures to</p>

	<p>ensure project progress. Within the collaborative culture created, an ethos of consultation, review, and feedback integration characterises the work.</p> <p>An evaluation of the Toolkit found that the Toolkit is a supportive resource for busy practitioners in their work with children and families. A large majority of respondents, 80%, reported that the EPPI Toolkit was useful, very useful or extremely useful to them in their work.</p>
<p><u>List three key elements for successful implementation</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaboration with Third Level colleagues to develop and implement an overarching framework to improve practice and recruit and retain a skilled and competent workforce. 2. The Evidence-Informed, Outcomes-Focused Toolkit 3. The Evidence-Informed Practitioner Programme (EIPP)
<p><u>Source of Funding</u></p>	<p>The Tusla ICT Directorate funds the provision of IT equipment. As many of the innovations are online, the majority of funding involves staff time with practice and workforce colleagues delivering the initiatives as part of their existing workload.</p>
<p><u>Links to supporting documents:</u></p>	<p>www.tusla.ie</p>