



Prifysgol
Y Drindod
Univers
Trinity Saint

Learning from multi-agency reviews

Target Audience: Anyone who has involvement with domestic abuse & safeguarding children or adults in their role and with the ability to influence practice within their organisation.

Learning Outcomes:

- Opportunity to shape practice
- Reflect on cases
- Make a difference to how we work together
- Consider and identify risk
- Share good practice and learning
- Use a Think Family approach



Workshop Dates

(full day)

Monday 4th November

Walsford

Monday 11th November

Colchester

Thursday 14th November

Chelmsford

Tuesday 19th November

Harlow



Working with Families



Multi-agency Working

Nathan Leymes



Every Child Matters, 2004



ECAY4005 Multi-Agency Working: Policy in Practice

Theme 2: Principles of Multi-Agency Working (MAW)

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

The Key Issue – A reminder

“Multi-disciplinary
collaborations involve a number
of ***differences*** that can
easily ***clash***”

Thomson
(2015:172)

Key Concepts and Issues

Neil Thomson goes on to identify the following areas where conflict may occur;

- Values
- Perspectives
- Priorities
- Expectations
- Perspectives
- Norms
- Budgets
- Protocols
- Experiences

(Thompson, 2015:172-3)

Take some time to discuss these areas of potential conflict in your group. What examples can you think of, either from your own experience or from your previous studies.



Principles of Working Together

Thompson further suggests some principles that should underpin multi-agency working;

- Avoid stereotypes
- Understand each other's roles
- Be sensitive to different values, priorities , norms etc.
- Avoid hierarchies
- Avoid preciousness
- Focus on communication

Thompson (2015:175-7)



Read through the short extract from 'People Skills' and then discuss the implications of these principles for multi-agency working.

Multi-agency working: Problems

- **1990s:** some services (e.g. children in care) seen to be **failing**. Cases such as:
 - Victoria Climbié (2000)
 - 'Baby P' (2009)
 - And, unfortunately, much more [recent cases](#)
- Child Practice Reviews into each case give the same messages, including;
 - Highlighted **continued failure** of agencies to **communicate**
 - Need for greater **information sharing**
 - Practical issues for service users

What other issues can you think of?

Legislative and Policy Approaches

- Each time such serious cases occur Governments (both UK and Welsh) respond with new legislation or policy
- We will take some time to look at some examples
- However, these are only to illustrate Government responses
- You will be able to find your own examples through research.
- The first example was a response to the Victoria Climbié case

The Children Act 2004

The **Children Act (2004)** focused on five areas of rights that all children have, namely:

- The right to be healthy
- The right to stay safe
- The right to enjoy and achieve
- The right to make a contribution
- The right to achieve economic well-being (Gaspar, 2010, p.13)



The Act also emphasised:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

- Greater recognition of children's rights
- Greater consultation
- Agencies working more closely together (Gaspar, 2010, p.13)

UK Policy – An Example

Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families

- Promoted a coalition of organisations and individuals from one sector who agree to work together for a common aim or a set of compatible aims, and agree to work together in a co-operative and mutually supportive fashion. (i.e. multi-agency working)
- Involving parents and carers in planning and developing services is the best way of creating cost-effective, responsive services that work for families. (i.e. consultation)

HM Treasury (2007)

Study Skills - Legislation

- On the previous slide we looked at the Children Act (2004) on the website Legislation.gov.uk

Why do you think we used that website?

Please revisit the site on your own device to consider the question further.



Welsh Context

Guidance (NAFWC12/07) – Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004

- It sets out how all agencies and professionals should work together to safeguard and promote children's welfare and protect them from harm.
- It is addressed to all statutory partners on Local Safeguarding Children Boards and others whose work brings them into contact with children and families.
- It is relevant to those working in the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors.

B.A.S.W. (No Date)



[Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act \(2004\)](#)

Welsh Context

The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010

Had the following emphasis:

- Eradicating child poverty
- Encouraging play and participation
- Improved regulation of child minding and day care for children
- Integrated Family Support Teams (we will look at this later in this Module)



[Children& Families \(Wales\) Measure 2010](#)

Welsh Context

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

- Very significant legislation for multi-agency working in Wales
- This will form a separate Theme later in the Module.
- However, the following links might be useful for your research



Link to the Act http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw_20140004_en.pdf



Link to WG Social Care pages <https://gov.wales/social-care>

Welsh Context

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- The Act will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.
- This new law will mean that, for the first time, public bodies listed in the Act must do what they do in a sustainable way.
- Public bodies need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.
- It will expect them to:
 - work together better
 - involve people reflecting the diversity of our communities
 - look to the long term as well as focusing on now
 - take action to try and stop problems getting worse - or even stop them happening in the first place.



[Future Generations
Commissioner](#)

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)



Welsh Policy Context – Rewriting the Future

- In 2014 the then Minister for Education Huw Lewis launched [Rewriting the Future: Raising ambition and attainment in Welsh schools](#)
- The paper formed part of the Welsh Government's campaign to tackle the effects of poverty in Wales
- As part of this drive the Minister also commissioned the *FaCE the challenge together: Family and community engagement toolkit for schools in Wales*
- A team of three practitioners were seconded to work with Welsh Government officials to create the toolkit.

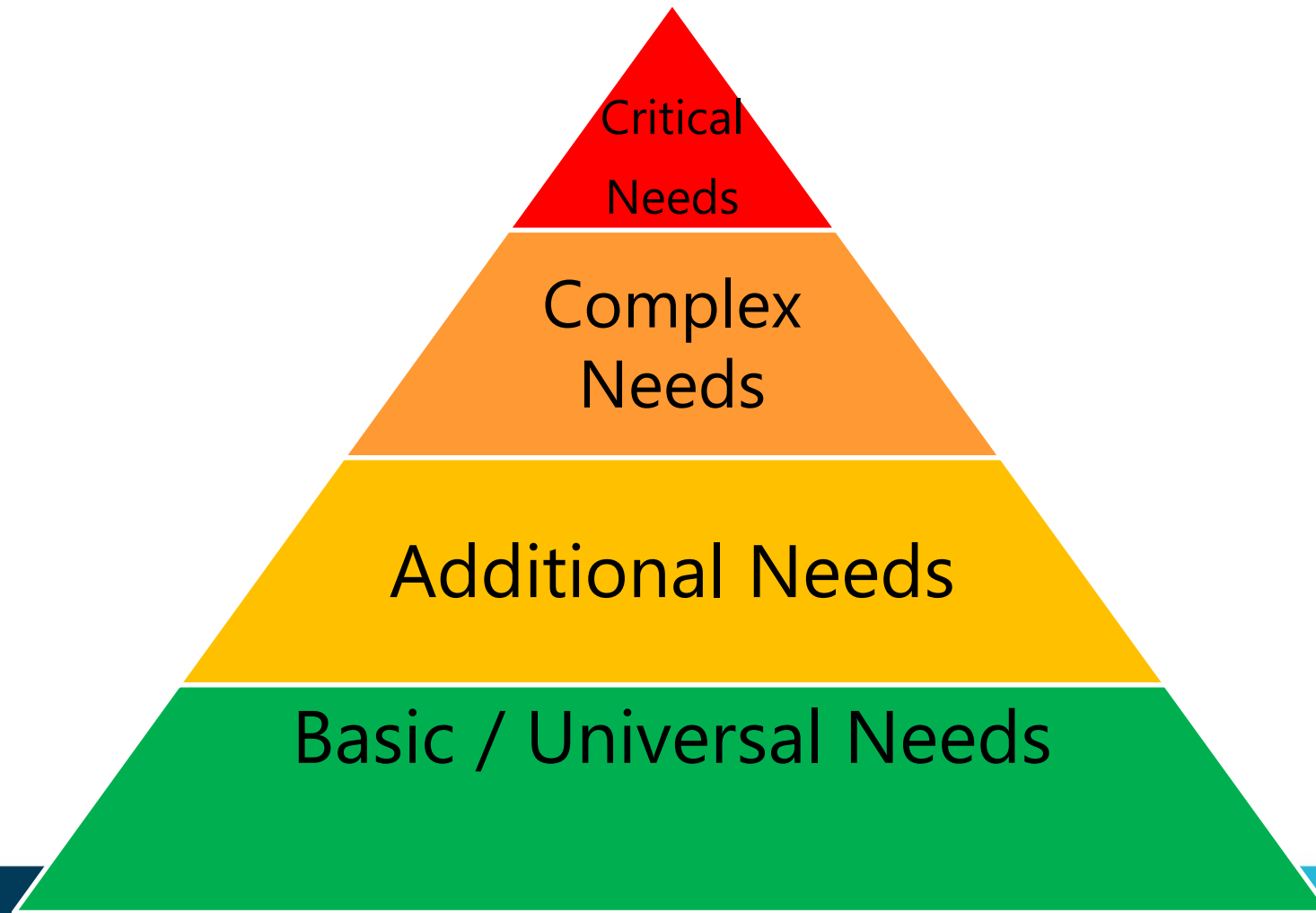
[\(Department for Education and Skills, 2016\)](#)

Welsh Policy Context

Local Government: Newport

- In 2014 Newport City Council developed the 'Team Around the Cluster' approach
- It is designed to identify needs in children and families before the needs reach crisis point
- It is also designed to address many of the issues raised by the various reports into failings in support for people in need
- As with all Local Authorities in Wales it assumes a **four-tiered model of need**.

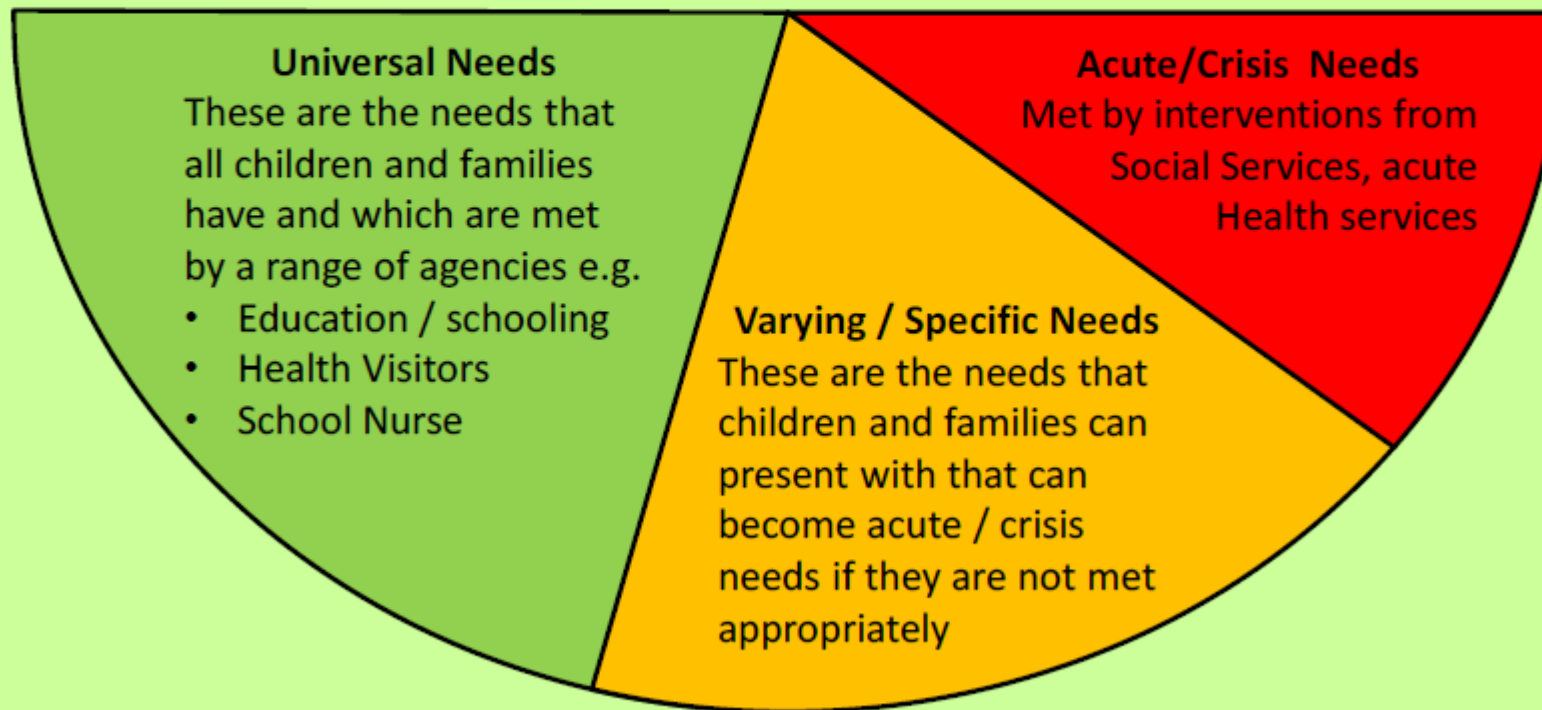
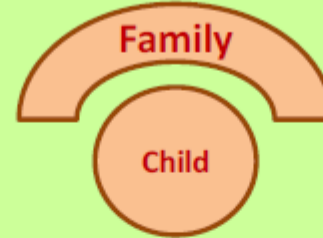
The Four Tier Model of Need



Team Around the Cluster - Supporting Need



Varying needs



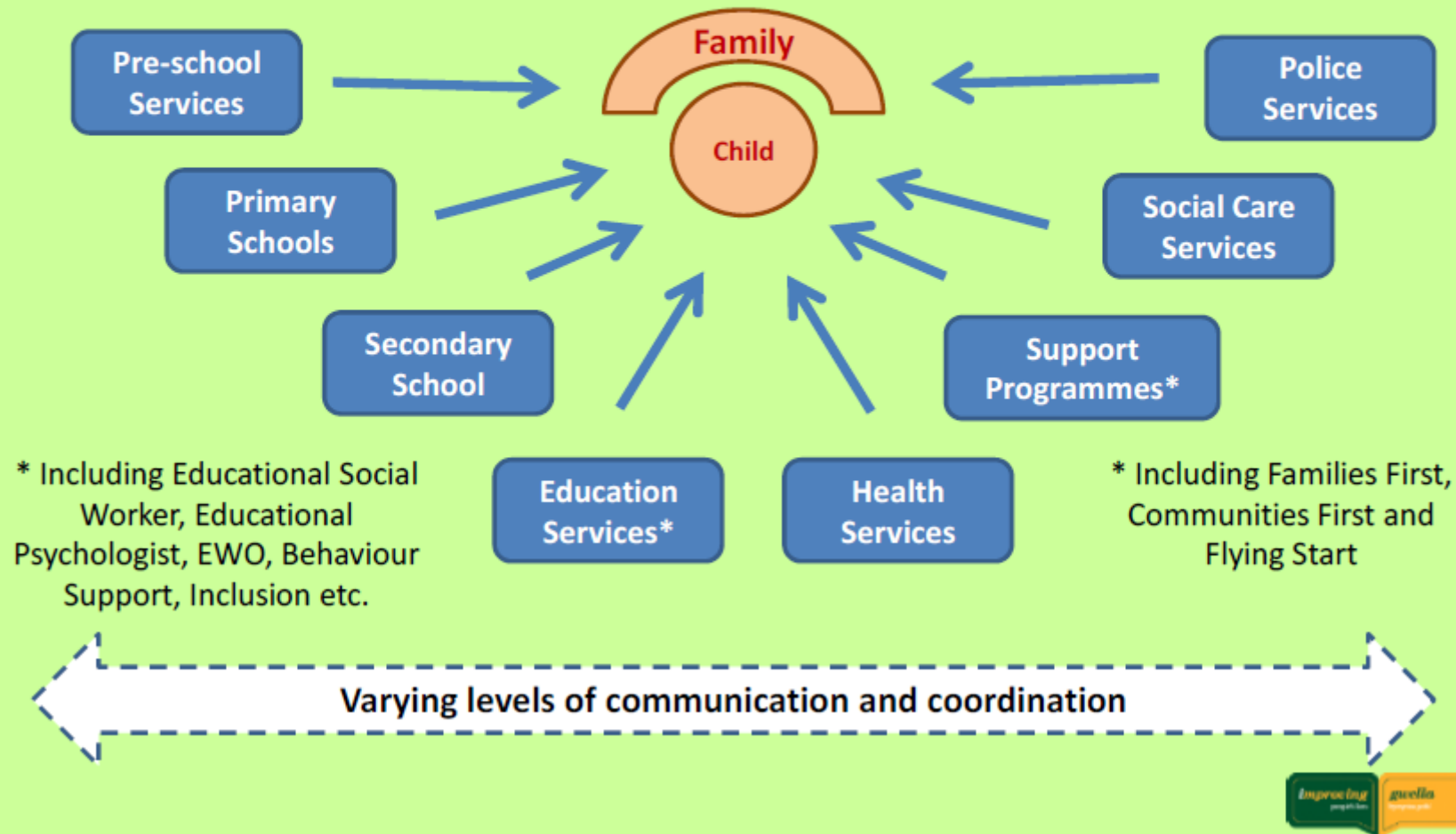
Team Around the Cluster will coordinate, enhance and integrate the provision of services to support families with varying / specific needs

Team Around the Cluster - Supporting Need

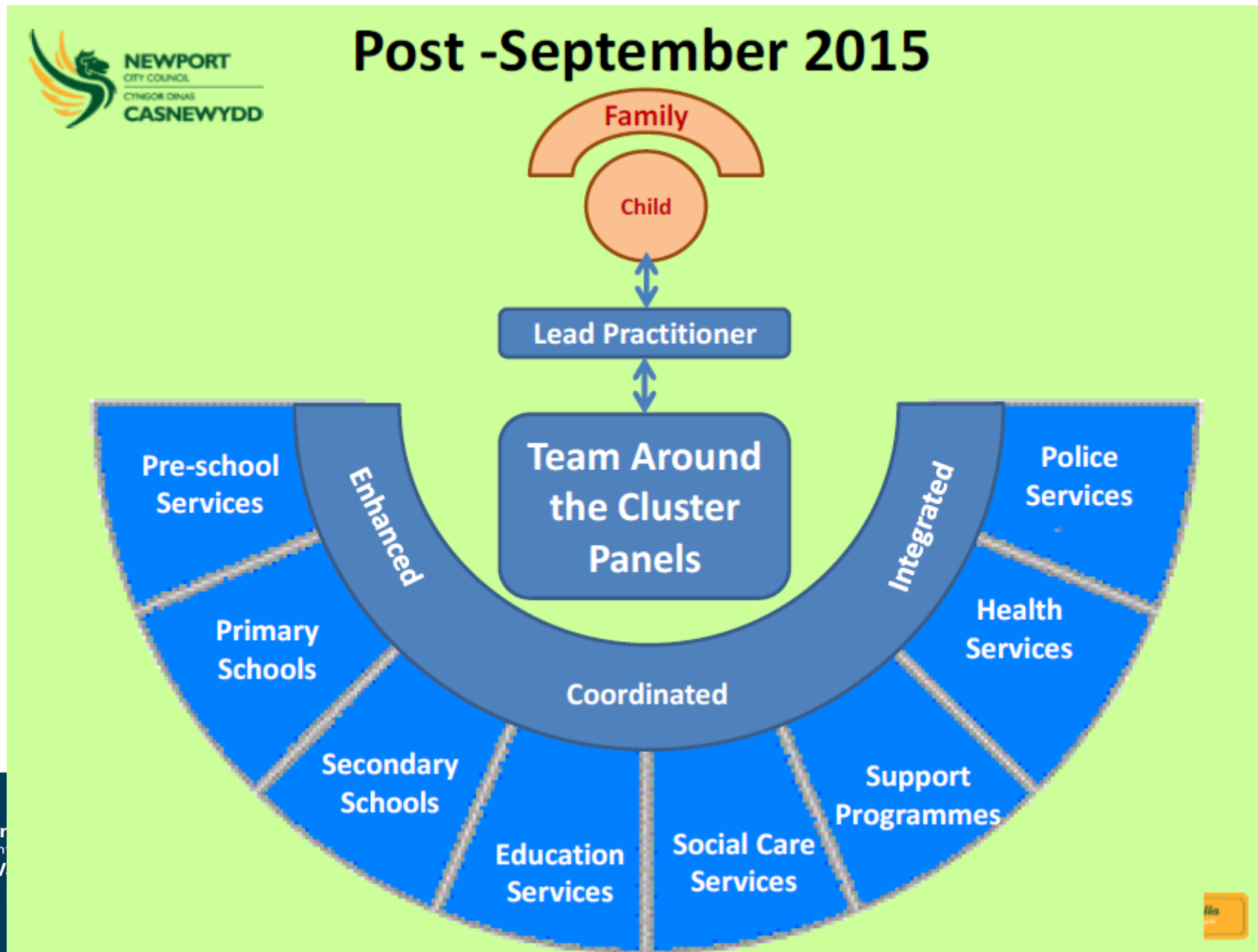
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Pre-September 2015



Team Around the Cluster - Supporting Need



'Joined-up ' services

- trend in policy development within the UK for Youth work, social work & health work etc.
- Professionals are expected to **work together** and share their expertise and skills.
- This can have **positive** outcomes:
 - New ways of working can be developed.
- BUT some may feel their 'unique' skills are **downgraded** or **lost**

(Tucker cited in Harrison & Wise, 2005, p.208)

The Concept of MAW: Terminology

- Each of the key agencies has their **own language** and **jargon**:
- Community Work, Education, Social Services, Health, Housing, Police, Family Support, Counselling Services etc...
- Complexities of practitioners 'working together' not helped by **proliferation of terminology** used to describe it.
- '**Conceptual hybridity**' : one concept being grafted onto another = **confusion!**
- Multi-agency/inter-agency/Trans-agency
- Multi-professional/inter-disciplinary
- Coordination/cooperation/collaboration/partnerships
- 'Joined-up-thinking' and 'joined-up-working'
- Cross-boundary working/networks/integrated working

Foley and Rixon(2008)

Terminology - Partnership

- '**Partnership**': risen to prominence in **government strategy**:
- 1997 Labour Government policy often delivered through 'partnerships' e.g. 'Sure Start'.
- Required bringing together of all stakeholders in statutory, voluntary, and private sector, but also parents and carers.
- Aimed to bring **smaller voluntary organisations** into **partnership** with **larger statutory ones**, especially small community organisations and faith groups.

Foley and Rixon(2008)

Partnership Working

- New ethos of working may be better described as 'Partnership working' as it entails:
" The underlying desire for new ways of developing and refining the complex (pattern) of professional relationships focused on improvements for families and children".

(Michael Gasper, 2010, p.5)

Terminology – other examples

- 'integrated'
- 'holistic'
- 'partnership'
- Words that give a **positive spin** to practice
- Whereas in **reality** this practice is often experienced as:
- 'separate'
- 'isolated'
- 'frustrating'
- In other words, working in partnership can be **easier to talk about** than **make happen in practice**

(Reid *cited in* Harrison et al 2007:165)

Key elements of Effective Partnership Working

From the above examples, as well as many others, we can identify a number of key elements for effective multi-agency working as follows;

- All stakeholders are valued
- Change from the bottom and not the top down
- Services brought to the community rather than other way round
- Co-location 'under one roof'
- Access to training
- Prioritising to highest areas of need

Key elements of Effective Partnership Working

- Causes rather than effects need to be analysed and addressed
- Greater development of advocacy services – giving the vulnerable a voice
- Support to encourage independence not dependency
- Non-judgemental working

We will continue to explore these during this Module

Multi-agency working: Opportunities and challenges

Opportunities:

- Easier access to services for users and carers
- Wider access to a range of skills and expertise
- Improvement in professional competence
- Joint planning
- Sharing budgets

Multi-agency working: Opportunities and challenges

Challenges:

- Fear of change
- Sharing Budgets!
- Leadership
- National priorities versus local need
- Different (competing?)
- New ways of working

Conclusions

**Multi-agency working / partnership working policies,
as with many social policies emerge out of:**

- Political necessity – changing needs
- Economic necessity – changing demography
- Milestone/Events- changing perceptions
- New philosophy – changing ideas about how to meet need
- Research and Consultation
- Social necessity – failures in the current systems

References

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- Cheminais, R., *Effective Multi-Agency Partnerships: putting Every Child Matters into Practice*, London: SAGE Publications, 2009 **N.B. Chapter 1 of this text is available here** https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/25240_book_item_25240.pdf [Accessed 09/12/2022]
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- Foley, P., and Rixon, A., *Changing children's services: working and learning together*, Bristol: The Policy Press, 2008.

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- Lacey P, *Support Partnerships: Collaboration in action*, London: David Fulton Publishers, 2001
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Additional Resources – Not used in slides

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- White S and Featherstone B (2005) 'Communicating misunderstandings: multi-agency work as social practice', *Child & Family Social Work*, 10(3), pp. 207–216. Available at: <https://search-ebshost-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=106514171&site=ehost-live>