

integrated working

Fact sheet

Integrated working is everyone supporting children and young people working together effectively to put the child at the centre, meet their needs and improve their lives.

By combining their professional expertise, knowledge and skills, and involving the child or young person and family throughout, practitioners can identify needs earlier, deliver a coordinated package of support that is centred on the child or young person, and help to secure better outcomes for them.

Integrated working is achieved through collaboration and coordination at all levels, across all services, in both single and multi-agency settings. It requires clear and ongoing leadership and management. At an operational level, it is facilitated by the adoption of common service delivery models, tools and processes.

Integrated strategy

At a strategic level, implementation of integrated working is underpinned and supported by:

- development of Children and Young People's Plans;
- the Children's Services Grant;
- Regional Development Managers from the Children's Workforce Development Council offering regional support and advice on the development of integrated children's workforce strategies.
- monitoring – using the annual performance assessment and joint area reviews (JARs.)

Integrated processes

Integrated processes will 'drive' multi-agency working. They will also support the delivery of integrated frontline services. Key integrated processes include:

Better information sharing between professionals: appropriate information sharing underpins all integrated processes. Clear cross-government guidance has been developed for all practitioners who work with children and young people to ensure they understand when, why and how they should share information.

The Common Assessment Framework for children and young people: a national, common process for initial assessment to identify more efficiently the additional needs of children and young people at risk of poor outcomes. It will reduce duplication of assessment, produce a shared language across agencies and improve referral between agencies.

The role of the lead professional which is to:

- act as a single point of contact that children, young people and their families can trust, and who is able to support them in making choices and in navigating their way through the system;
- ensure that children and families get appropriate interventions when needed, which are well planned, regularly reviewed and effectively delivered;
- reduce overlap and inconsistency when more than one practitioner is working with a child.

Piloting the concept of the budget holding lead professional: testing whether better service packages could be delivered by giving lead professionals a budget to procure goods and commission services directly from providers.

Developing ContactPoint: ContactPoint will provide a quick way for a practitioner to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. This basic online directory will be available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs.

On 1 October 2006, CWDC took over responsibility from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, formerly DfES) for the implementation of:

- Information Sharing skills, knowledge and practice
- The Common Assessment Framework
- Role of the lead professional
- Structuring multi-agency working

This fact sheet and other useful information can be found on the CWDC website which also has links to the information on the Every Child Matters website.

For more resources and information:
visit the Children's Workforce Development
Council website: www.cwdcouncil.org.uk,
or the Every Child Matters website:
www.ecm.gov.uk.

November 2007 IW12/0907

