

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

28 APRIL 2016

MEDWAY CHILDREN'S ACTION NETWORK ACTION PLAN 2016/17

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Summary

This paper updates Board members on the work of Medway Children's Action Network (CAN) and its plans for 2016.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Although early help is non statutory, Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote cooperation between the authority, its relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority's area as the authority considers appropriate. The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the wellbeing of all children in the authority's area, which includes protection from harm and neglect. In Medway, we have established a partnership called Medway Children's Action Network (CAN) to promote cooperation.

2. Background

2.1 Medway CAN is a partnership of key leaders of services for children, young people and families in Medway. Its key purpose is:

- narrowing the gap in education, health and social outcomes
- identifying and sharing best practice; and
- providing support and challenge for stable, sustainable, change.

2.2 Its role is to develop and implement improvements to services for children. It does this by leading the development of a systemic approach to early intervention and prevention that makes best use of our total resource, supports integrated working and invests in interventions and services that make a difference.

2.3 The partnership approach to early help has recently been strengthened with the establishment of the early help steering group in March 2016. This brings together operational managers of the relevant services to monitor

performance; ensure core processes are understood and observed; and discuss improvements that can be made.

3. Advice and analysis

3.1 Appendix 1 is an updated action plan for Medway CAN, showing progress since last autumn. Significant pieces of ongoing work are:

- Development of a more coherent and effective offer for children and young people with emotional needs. These are cases that fall below the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) threshold and where, after consultation with schools, we believe there is scope for improved commissioning. This project will be informed by a teacher Focus Group and will report in July 2016.
- Also as part of Medway CAN's drive to improve emotional health and wellbeing, we have recently deployed part of the Local Transformation Programme grant to:
 - develop a Masters level qualification for teachers to improve speech and language provision in schools;
 - provide additional support for early years providers to develop their skills in relation to speech and language; and
 - extended a programme to raise awareness of emotional and mental health issues in secondary schools and train peer mentors
- The new early help assessment will replace the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). It will perform the same function, but use a shorter, clearer, outcomes-focussed assessment tool that prompts practitioners to consider all of the issues that might be impacting on a family and which is easily shared between members of a Team Around the Family (TAF). They are already in use in services and schools who are piloting them and we expect rollout across all services in summer 2016. This will be accompanied by a training programme.
- Dialogue with leaders of community organisations to establish how we can support them in the work they do to develop individual, family and community resilience. Larger voluntary sector organisations are already involved in the development of new processes and pathways and in the governance of early help. This piece of work is linked to the development of peer mentors in a number of areas and community organisations are already being brought into early help interventions. The next step is to clarify what we can do through commissioning to support individuals and organisations.

4. Risk management

4.1 The risks to early help in Medway are outlined below. Their likelihood and severity are being reduced by greater cooperation:

| Risk | Description | Action to avoid or mitigate risk |
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| The size of the workforce and number of agencies delivering early help services. | Keeping colleagues informed is an ongoing priority. | The early help bulletin and the early help steering group are in place to keep colleagues informed. Standard clauses in contracts setting out expectations in relation to providers of early help services are also now in place. |
| Different decisions taken about priorities and operational issues | This was a high risk 18 months ago, but is now low. | The partnership needs to continue to ensure that the early help strategy influences decision making in all partner organisations, through the work of the early help panel and early help coordinators in terms of practice; and the early help steering group's monitoring of impact. |
| Measurement of impact and outcomes is difficult | The early help assessment will make this more straightforward | The Integrated Family Support Service Business Unit is a valuable resource to track and report on the early help outcomes framework. Medway's outcomes framework is in line with that developed by the South East Improvement Partnership, which will in time enable benchmarking of our performance. |

5. Financial and legal implications

5.1 None at this stage. Development of commissioning options will entail recommendations about realigning expenditure within existing budgets. This work will not lead to a request for additional funding.

6. Recommendation

6.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board notes progress with Medway CAN's action plan.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Updated action plan

Background papers

None.

Early help action plan

| Actions | What that involves | Timescale | Who | Progress |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|---|
| Finalise the revised early help strategy 2015-17 | | | | |
| Complete needs analysis | Re-draft and incorporate outcomes framework | Mid September 2015 | Early Help Lead | Completed |
| Develop a mobilisation plan | Outline what is expected of parents, practitioners, young people and communities in delivery of the early help strategy | By end November 2015 | Early Help Lead, in discussion with Medway CAN members | Dialogue with partners in early 2016 produced set of recommended actions now being taken forward by early help steering group |
| Agree outcomes measures for early help | | | | |
| Develop outcome measures for building protective factors for emotional health and wellbeing | Propose options for headline outcome measures and key indicators to Medway CAN working group and professional experts and agree preferred measures | By mid September 2015 | Early Help Lead and Medway CAN working group | Completed |
| | Develop proposals for implementation, within the CAMHS Local Transformation Plan | By mid November 2015 | Early Help Lead, Public Health and CAMHS commissioner | |

Appendix 1

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| | Agree outcome measures with Medway CAN and Chair of Improvement Board | Early December 2015 | Early Help Lead | |
| Develop new processes and initiatives, in collaboration with schools and other partners, to deliver the improvements we want to see to emotional health and wellbeing | Work with schools to develop new ways of working to change practice, support schools based staff and improve performance | November – December 2015 | Early Help Lead, CAMHS commissioner, Medway CAN members and Public Health | Has developed into a distinct piece of work to rationalise the offer for children and young people below the CAMHS threshold, as part of the Local Transformation Plan. This will clarify the outcomes expected of these services and propose commissioning models that will ensure better use is made of the resource available. |
| | Consult with colleagues who were involved in the development of the emotional health and wellbeing strategy | October – November 2015 | Early Help Lead, Public Health | |
| | Implement new approaches | January – March 2015 | Early Help Lead, Public Health, Medway CAN members | |
| | Produce a framework for evaluating success of initiatives and new ways of working. Assume 3 year plan. | January – March 2015 | Early Help Lead | |

| Revise the early help commissioning plan | | | | |
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| Develop a revised integrated commissioning plan for early help, in the light of CSR decisions in November and reductions in the Public Health grant | Finalise priorities within needs analysis | By end September | Early Help Lead and Medway CAN members | Commissioning plan is complete. Early help principles and practice will now be embedded in all contracts. Dialogue in early 2016 has established the overall resource available to work in teams Around the Family. |
| | Establish what the funding mechanisms for early help services are; and their relationship to the early help system, so that Teams Around the Family can be mobilised | By end November | Early Help Lead, Head of Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS), Children's Commissioner | |
| | Complete early help commissioning plan | By mid December 2015 | Children's Commissioner and Early Help Lead | |
| Strengthen processes to support early help assessments and Teams Around the Family | | | | |
| Embed new workflow process, early help coordinator roles and early help panel. | Communicate with early help workforce, operational managers and lead professional network, so that people understand what is happening. | August, September and October 2015 | Early Help Lead, Early help coordinators | Completed |
| | Recruit additional early help coordinators and embed them in area based team and with partner agencies in localities | September and October 2015 | Head of IFSS, IFSS Business Unit Manager, early help coordinators | |

Appendix 1

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| | Set up and run early help panel and evaluate its function and practice (including information sharing) with members | September – November 2015 | IFSS Business Unit Manager, Early Help Lead, panel members | |
| Develop common documentation for early help | <p>Pilot a single outcomes plan with FSS</p> <p>Agree referral mechanism with Health professionals and bring them into the pilot</p> <p>Wider consultation</p> <p>Implementation and communication.</p> | <p>August and September 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p> <p>October – November 2015</p> <p>April 2016</p> | <p>IFSS Business Unit, early help coordinators,</p> <p>Early Help Lead, early help coordinators</p> <p>IFSS Business Unit Manager</p> <p>IFSS Business Unit, Early Help coordinators, Early Help Lead</p> | Virtually completed – an extended pilot is testing the acceptability and usability of a single assessment tool that is shorter and more focussed on outcomes. |
| Develop IT solution to support early help assessments and outcomes | <p>Test feasibility of Council wide system</p> <p>Continue to develop clarity about requirements through</p> | <p>To April 2016</p> <p>August – December 2015</p> | <p>IFSS Business Unit</p> <p>IFSS Business Unit, Early Help</p> | No longer applicable – the early help assessment referred to above is a stand alone tool that will work on all partners' operating |

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| | development of new documentation for recording | | coordinators | systems. |
| Support Medway CAN and build the partnership approach | | | | |
| Take forward the programme of work, maintain contact between members. | <p>Involve members in agreeing outcome measures for improving emotional health and wellbeing; and developing interventions and service redesign to achieve them.</p> <p>Arrange next Medway CAN meeting, to agree the activities that will support the emotional health and wellbeing outcomes</p> | <p>Measures agreed by end September; service redesign and interventions by end November</p> <p>February 2016</p> | <p>Early Help Lead and Medway CAN members</p> <p>Early Help Lead</p> | Completed |
| Work with delivery partners to meet Troubled Families objective of developing new ways of working | <p>Agree process for setting objectives and reviewing progress with MAfF Strategic Group</p> <p>Ensure links between commissioning and universal and community based services</p> | <p>By end November 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Early Help Lead and Head of IFSS, with Medway Action for Families (MAfF) strategic group</p> <p>Early Help Lead, Children's Commissioner</p> | Completed. MAfF Strategic Group has now been superceded by the early help steering group. |

| Work with universal and community based services to develop capacity and reduce need | | | | |
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| Build on the work to strengthen the CAF process by developing a stronger preventative offer in universal services | Define the changes that would make a difference to the key outcomes highlighted in the early help strategy, whether in practice, service design, or performance. Make recommendations. | November 2015 – March 2016 | Early Help Lead, with Medway CAN | An early help newsletter informs a wide range of practitioners about developments. |
| | Build on the work already underway to develop a partnership approach to improving emotional health and wellbeing, to identify other opportunities for improvement. Also incorporate messages from the early help panel. | November 2015 – March 2016 | Early Help Lead | Proposals on supporting families more effectively within existing resource are being developed. |
| | Ensure that practitioners in relevant universal services – and community organisations, as well as parents and young people – are aware of key preventative actions, through developing a set of key messages and communicating them effectively. | November 2015 – January 2016 | Early Help Lead | |
| Work with Medway Voluntary Action and other partners to mobilise the | Develop an understanding of community capacity | November 2015 – March 2016 | Early Help Lead, with Medway Voluntary Action | Medway CAN discussed how it can work more effectively with communities |

Appendix 1

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| <p>assets of communities and voluntary sector organisations</p> | <p>Explore the potential for increased volunteering activity and other civic initiatives</p> <p>Support the development of peer mentors and peer support in key services, to help embed preventative messages</p> | <p>November 2015 – March 2016</p> <p>To June 2016</p> | <p>(MVA)</p> <p>Early Help Lead, with Medway Youth Trust (MYT)</p> <p>Early Help Lead, with Children’s Centres</p> | <p>and community based organisations at its meeting on 3 February. Actions are being taken forward by the early help coordinators, in terms of work with individual families; and through dialogues with MVA and Medway Ethnic Minorities Forum (MEMF), which is ongoing.</p> |
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