



Child Protection Improvement Programme (CPIP)

Meeting of the External Advisory Group – Tuesday 30 August 2016

Progress Update

“A Child Protection System that keeps children safer from abuse and neglect by placing the wellbeing of Scotland’s children at the heart of everything it does.”

1. Work has progressed in a number of priority areas of the Child Protection Improvement Programme in recent weeks and this short update paper summarises the latest developments. Further periodic updates will be supplied to group members via email and you can keep abreast of what is going on via the Scottish Government’s child protection web pages: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/child-protection>.

A child protection system where structures and processes support children, young people and families

2. The System Review Group, led by its independent Chair, Catherine Dyer, met for the first time on 19th of August to consider the role of Child Protection Committees. This first meeting was preceded by a scoping exercise with sector experts, conducted by CELCIS who are supporting the Review, to help frame the review discussions.
3. A benefits’ realisation was conducted last year to test whether the changes brought in by The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (2011 Act) had delivered the expected benefits. The Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) has considered the benefits’ realisation and concluded that the reformed hearings’ system is sound. CHIP is now planning to ensure national consistency and transparency around practice and decision-making. It will, among other quality improvement activities, produce an action plan in the coming weeks on legal representatives and their interaction with children, families and wider system partners, following recent research by the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

A child protection system that values and supports the people who work in it

4. We have analysed the feedback from the Leadership Summit held in June. Using this as our starting point, we continue to scope a programme of work around leadership to support leaders in their complex role. We intend to build on existing work already being undertaken by leadership programmes, rather than duplicating existing work, to develop leadership capacity within the sector. Much of the current work has focussed on capturing the existing provision of leadership support: we will continue to build that picture in the coming weeks by engaging directly with leaders in the sector to gather their views on meaningful leadership support.



A child protection system that recognises the importance of supporting families to tackle neglect

5. We have finalised the process of commissioning delivery partners to undertake a programme of neglect improvement work in selected local authority sites. The Centre of Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland, Strathclyde University (CELCIS) and the Centre for Child Wellbeing and Protection, Stirling University (CCWP), will work closely on the design and delivery of the programme, with each centre making a substantive contribution in their respective areas of subject expertise. The objective is to identify existing areas of promising practice, whilst also examining ways in which to promote sustainable practice improvements, using insights from improvement methodology. The CCWP are leading on a number of research activities designed to support the promotion of sustainable practice improvement, including a rapid review of the existing evidence of what works in respect of chronic neglect, a synthesis of existing neglect toolkits and the development of a self-assessment tool to support local analysis of context. The programme will benefit also from the proven track-record that CELCIS have in delivering successful improvement programmes. We are now in the process of finalising selection criteria for the test sites.
6. The programme, commencing now, will run to the end of the current financial year. Interim recommendations, based on the assessment of local needs and circumstances will be provided to Ministers in December, with intensive improvement focussed work taking place from January. Findings will be used to inform further phases of activity.
7. Following an internal review of the legislation on child cruelty (s. 12 Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937) a report will shortly be provided to the Programme's Internal Resourcing and Advisory Groups and the External Advisory Group, highlighting options for reform of the existing legislation. Consideration is given in the report to how the offence might be expanded to explicitly include emotional harm. In addition, potential interactions with the proposed new domestic violence legislation, which is being led by colleagues in the Justice Directorate, has also been explored. If Ministers are content to pursue the proposed recommendations, it is anticipated that a public consultation will be held in early 2017.

A child protection system that is transparent and learning

8. A dedicated analyst has recently joined the team to lead on the development of data and evidence activities. In the coming weeks, the following data analysis activity will take place:
 - mapping the child protection system and processes
 - developing a child protection outcomes framework
 - mapping the current data & evidence landscape
 - gap analysis to identify gaps in data and evidence
 - identification of how a data & evidence base could be developed
 - recommendations on how this can be achieved.



This system and process analysis will be tested in a series of workshops with experts across the sector. Recommendations for improving data capture and promoting reflective learning within the child protection system, broadly conceived, will be provided to Ministers (as part of an integrated set of CPIP recommendations) in December.

9. We have had some early engagement with the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland with a view to undertaking further scoping work in September on taking forward improvements to the existing Joint Inspections Programme, which is due to conclude in December 2017. The remit of those conversations going forwards will address how it is possible to improve the quality of inspections' reporting and the consistency of grading in relation to inspections, including the role of self-evaluation.

Implementing the Children's aspects of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015

10. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 (the "2015 Act") makes provision about human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour, including provisions about: offences and sentencing, victim support and reducing activity related to offences. We are working with partners to develop the children's aspects of Scotland's first Human Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy which we plan to publish for consultation in Autumn 2016 (implementing Section 35). We also plan to update the 2012 Age Assessment Practice Guidance to reflect Section 12 of the 2015 Act (Presumption of Age).
11. In addition, we are undertaking a programme of public consultation on Section 11 of the 2015 Act (independent child trafficking guardians) in three specific areas: Parental Rights & Responsibilities (PRR); relevant authorities and the role of the independent child trafficking guardian; responsibilities and functions of the guardian. The consultation on PRR and relevant authorities closed on the 15 August and officials are working their way through the responses with the aim of reporting back to the sector shortly. The consultation on the role, responsibilities and functions of the guardian will be consulted on later in the year.