

Information Sheet - How Local Authorities are Measuring the Impact and Progress of Short Breaks: Personalisation

This information sheet provides a brief summary of our findings from the initial contact with all 152 local authorities over a six week period between November and December 2011. The findings enabled us to have a better understanding of how local authorities are delivering short breaks and examine the extent and impact of any changes since the end of the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. We used this information to identify the immediate and on-going support needs of local authorities.

Personalisation was high on the agenda for local authorities and they were keen to learn the lessons from the Pathfinders. There were variations in how Personalisation was progressing, ranging from:

- Local authorities who were in the early stages of developing Personalisation through Direct Payments
- Others who were making progress towards providing choice and flexibility through both Direct Payments and Individual Budgets.

The use of Direct Payments was the most popular method of supporting Personalisation and providing choice and flexibility for families.

Individual Budgets provision

In terms of Individual Budgets, local authorities recognised the complexity of Personalisation, with many local authorities planning to pilot Individual Budgets over the coming year. Local authorities who have already piloted Individual Budgets reported good outcomes emerging including:

- Increased choice and flexibility of services
- Improved partnership working with families.

Resource allocation models

A range of resource allocation models were used and it was clear that “one size does not fit all”. The most popular model used was the In Control Resource Allocation System and a number of local authorities were exploring the use of other outcomes-focussed frameworks.

Local authorities were keen to learn from the experience of colleagues in Adult Services who were much further down the road of Personalisation, and who had built up a level of knowledge and expertise. One local authority which had recently merged its children and adult services into one Directorate reported that the merger had proven to be most beneficial in taking the Personalisation agenda for children and young people forward.

Key Factors which influence the successful development and implementation of Personalisation

The survey highlighted a number of key factors which influenced and supported the successful development and implementation of Personalisation:

- Having a clear understanding of the policy context and what that means for local authorities in taking Personalisation forward – local authorities have a clear strategy and plan in place
- Effective leadership and management capacity to drive the agenda forward – with an identified Officer who will champion at a local level
- The culture of the organisation is open to change and focussing on improving outcomes for disabled children and young people and their families is a key priority
- Ownership, engagement and commitment from all relevant parties including partners, practitioners, providers, parents and carers and disabled children and young people
- Using models and frameworks that are “fit for purpose” and having any necessary support services, systems and processes in place to support these
- Identification and allocation of resources
- Being aware of the players and leaders in the field, making good use of data, needs and intelligence to support the development of Personalisation
- Making good use of Best Practice examples e.g. using the findings from the Individual Budget pilot
- Having good communication and information strategies and using existing forums e.g. Parents Forum, Provider Forums, Disabled Children and Young People’s Forums to consult and keep informed of developments and progress
- Having a market that is responsive and stimulates competition.

Example of innovative and sustainable practice

Tower Hamlets Short Breaks Self Referral Initiative

Tower Hamlets Directory of Services includes a section on short breaks provision. Families eligible for a short break are now able to request a short break of their choice without the need for an assessment:

Download case study (.pdf) at <http://tinyurl.com/bouhfaj>

Swindon has initiated a new approach to accessing short break provision - offering direct access to individual short breaks without having to undertake a formal assessment:

Download case study (.pdf) at <http://tinyurl.com/bouhfaj>

Useful links:

Share magazine, a magazine for short break carers published by Short Breaks Network
July 2012 edition

Individual Budgets, Personalisation and Short Breaks

To request a copy contact Clare Westlake on 0117 9415361

clare.westlake@shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk

www.impactsb.co.uk