



Somerset
Partnership

Joint working between children's therapies and Local Authority Advisory Services in Somerset



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History and Context

- Changes in both services over the years
- Financial pressures in both Local Authority and Health Service
- Some good practice in collaboration and joint working
- Some historic joint working which has become less integrated over time



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Local Authority Consultation

- Parent consultation sessions across the county to discuss changes in advisory teacher services
- Feedback from parents that there are occasions where services from health and education are not well-joined
- Feedback from parents that at times they get advice which has conflicting elements or is unclear
- Strong message from parents that they would like services to work in a more coordinated way



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Meeting to launch work

- Workshop with representatives from services, parent representatives and commissioners to start to explore how to move this forward
- Group identified and agreed desired outcomes and discussed potential barriers and how to overcome them



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Pathway scoping

- Areas for pathways discussed and agreed
- Five workstreams identified:
 - Early Years
 - Physical Disabilities
 - Communication
 - Sensory Loss
 - Post 16





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Planning next steps

- Each workstream has a working group
- Membership is mixture of staff from therapies and advisory services and relevant parents will be asked to join the groups.
- Consultation will also take place with relevant education settings
- Meetings being arranged during summer
- Whole group will meet again to draw information together in October 2019





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Measuring Success

- Agreed pathways
- Improved service user experience – will need to gather feedback once pathways established
- Improved professional collaboration and satisfaction – ongoing links established and maintained



An accessible and equitable service for all families

Camilla Hutchings and Vicky Boyle





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Telephone Advice Line to improve access to therapies in Somerset



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History and Context

- Became a countywide Integrated Therapy Service in October 2009
- Working in episodes of care but difficult to discharge children who didn't have an active need for intervention as parents concerned about not having any access to support
- Many enquiries coming into the four bases from parents or professionals asking for advice on potential referrals – difficult to call back in a timely way



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Setting up

- Already doing multi-professional countywide triage four mornings a week, rotating round the bases
- IT services set up line which only opens at set times and at other times gives a recorded message
- Line can be programmed into different bases so can be answered by different teams depending on the day of the week
- Line will rotate to different phones so more than one call can be answered



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What it offers

- Anyone can call about a child with a Somerset GP – parent or professional
- If a professional has consent from the family they can talk about a named child but if not can access advice anonymously
- The line is staffed by an experienced SLT, OT and PT four mornings a week
- We do not have capacity to take referrals over the phone but will sometimes advise a referral and explain how to do it



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Evaluation and Feedback

- Feedback obtained from a random sample of callers
- 100% of respondents found their call helpful or extremely helpful
- Some very positive comments about the impact both from parents and professionals



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Comments

I have been trying
the advice I was
given and my child
is making progress
- Parent

The SLT really
put my mind at
rest – Parent

The therapist
was so kind and
helpful and took
time to listen to
me - Parent

I was worried I would need
to wait until I had my
appointment but the
therapist gave me some
ideas to try immediately -
Parent

I was able to ring
and get advice while
I was with the family
- Health Visitor

I have rung the
line several times
and always get
helpful advice -
SENCo



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Data

- Over 6,200 calls taken
- 50% - advice given and advised to refer
- 35% - advice given and no referral needed
- 15% - advice given and signposted elsewhere



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Outcomes

- Continued good feedback from families and other professionals
- Easier to discharge children being able to reassure parents that they can quickly access advice if needed in the future
- Able to stop some inappropriate referrals being made
- Training opportunity when advising other professionals