

Regional Update

The SE7 area

Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Medway, Surrey, and West Sussex – is one of the 20 SEN and Disability Green Paper Pathfinder areas testing proposed reforms to the system of support for disabled children and young people and those with Special Educational Needs. The work is jointly led by the SE7 Local Authorities and the Primary Care Trust Clusters and will run until March 2013.

Assessment and Planning

The regionally-developed SE7 assessment and planning framework is now being implemented locally. All areas are developing a local assessment & planning process. The assessment and planning cycle is inclusive and uses clear, person-centred language such as 'listen and understand' rather than 'assessment'.

It is crucial that this process is parent carer led and the plan is family owned. A key worker facilitates the listen and understand process and helps to maintain relationships between the family and practitioners. The key worker is the key contact for the family and is a consistent presence for the child or young person and their family.

Family recruitment

All areas are starting to recruit Pathfinder families. For the national evaluation Hampshire and West Sussex are also recruiting comparator families. While local areas are targeting specific geographical areas, age ranges or severity of need, the regional cohort of approximately 300 Pathfinder children and young people will cover the full range of age, and types and severity of need. This large cohort allows us to ensure our processes are also fit for purpose for those with low incidence needs.

Parent Carer involvement in SE7

"SE7 is very keen for parent carers to be involved in the Pathfinder. There is a group of Parent Carer Forums (PCF) working within the SE7 areas. There are two representatives who sit on the Regional Steering Group to represent the views of parent carers and a number of parent carer representatives who sit on the Local Change Boards so that parent carers' views are heard at a local level.

On the Regional Steering Group, there is also an independent parent carer advisor (from the National Network of Parent Carer Forums). Hampshire and Kent's Local Change Board both have a parent Chair. Across SE7, the PCFs have over 4000 parent carer members and also associate members (professionals and others with an interest in children with SEN)."

> **Debs Apsland** Kent Parent Participation Network
(www.se7pathfinder.co.uk)

For further information please contact:

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Good News from West Sussex

At the end of March we ran a very successful workshop introducing the Pathfinder and our single assessment framework and materials to a 40 strong audience of parents and practitioners from Health, Education and Social Care, prior to its imminent implementation with families.

The programme included:

- ❖ Input from members of the West Sussex Parents' Forum on their perspective of the existing assessment framework, and how they would like to see the system change
- ❖ An introduction to the principles underpinning the new approach
- ❖ Discussions about how the process would be different to existing practice.

Attendees considered how the new approach would affect them in their current roles and what they could do to support its implementation. The session was very positive with an overall feeling that the Pathfinder presents a genuine and exciting opportunity to explore and trial creative ways of achieving better outcomes for children with SEND and their families.

> **Jon Philpot** West Sussex SEND Pathfinder lead
(Jon.Philpot@westsussex.gov.uk)

Project Management

Regionally, the pathfinder is coordinated by East Sussex and the regional lead PCT cluster is NHS Sussex. In each of the 7 areas there is an identified Pathfinder lead, who is supported by project staff. Each PCT has identified a Pathfinder lead officer.

In their monthly meetings, the regional project manager and local project support staff work together to ensure the infrastructure supporting pathfinder activities is consistent across the region and that there is a good flow of communication between the broad range of local, regional and national stakeholders.

Evaluation

SQW, an independent research company, has been appointed by the government to evaluate the Pathfinder Programme nationally. They have also won the contract to evaluate SE7 regionally, which will provide independent, real time feedback on our progress and document the added value of working together as a region. The first report will be delivered at the end of May.

Personal Budgets

Each of the 7 areas is piloting personal budgets. Regionally, West Sussex are leading on this workstream and have organised a series of 5 regional workshops looking at aspects such as what funding goes into a personal budget and how to free up and coordinate the relevant funding streams.

Medway Pathfinder insight



Keith Wyncoll, Medway Project Manager and son David (ASD)

> **Keith Wyncoll** Medway SEND Pathfinder Project Manager (keith.wyncoll@medway.gov.uk).

He said, "We've achieved a lot in a short space of time and have worked hard to take engage with all relevant stakeholders. 'Boldly going' where no person has previously trodden! There is considerable buy-in from parent carers, professionals,

senior managers and politicians. This was given a particular boost by our successful Pathfinder Launch Event on 15th March and regular newsletters".

"As a parent of a severely disabled child, I see real relevance in developing a simplified, supported, joined-up process of assessment and planning. This should make a real difference to the lives of many hard pressed families".

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