

Appendix 6 - Quality Assurance Quarter 3 Overview Report.

This report seeks to provide members with an overview of some of the highlights of quality assurance activity that has taken place or been reported during quarter 3 in 2023-24.

Championing a Research Culture

This project that secured prestigious funding from National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) in January 2023 has been building on its momentum. The project is planned to develop and embed a research culture within pilot teams in Adult Social Care. The project has been delivering on this by working with three teams within Adult Social Care and has also been exceeding on its plans by recognising need in other areas of the department and offering support. This project is now recognised by the registering body Social Care Wales (SCW) as being ahead of other local authorities in Wales in meeting the codes of practice set out in the Welsh Governments Performance Improvement Framework. The project leads are being asked to disseminate learning, passion and tools to other Local Authorities within Wales and the United Kingdom and other Higher Education Institutions.

What have we been doing in this quarter?

- **Work with pilot teams:** Our champions of research in the pilot teams are beginning to 'take over' case mapping sessions and a sessions will be held to 'upskill' our research champions to feel confident whilst facilitating.
- **Kinship team:** We have explored the role of research informed practice with the Kinship Team and will support them in developing team knowledge from the themes put forward by the team.
- **Championing research day:** Preparations are well underway and there is keen interest from those already invited and we are nearing capacity for the day which will be approximately 100

What are we working on next?

- **Working with Llangatwg team:** Llangatwg will be the first children's services team to explore the research informed model of practice.
- **ADSS – The Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru Members' Spring Seminar 2024:** We will be sharing our championing a research model at the seminar, detailing the innovative approach to research funding to strengthen modes of working.
- **NICE annual conference:** We will be presenting our championing a research culture model of working at the NICE annual conference. This will be attended by over 500 participants.
- **Legal Department:** We have considered the role case mapping could play in the legal process both across children's and adults. We will explore themes from the legal process to inform our case mapping sessions with a view to holding research focused sessions on areas of practice.

- **eBook:** The practice toolkit will now be captured in an eBook, whereby practitioners can be prompted to consider the research base according to the practice topic. This will further be strengthened by good practice guidance, the legal framework and any practice tools.
- **Championing research day:** On the 27th March 2023 a conference will be held to share the practice model, a case mapping session and feedback from our pilot teams.

Most Significant Change (MSC) Stories and Story Telling Panel

In the previous report we highlighted that we held a story telling panel to hear about the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced domestic abuse. The findings of this panel have now been summarised and have been incorporated into a report highlighting NPT's response to domestic abuse and the subsequent action plan that will be developed in 2024.

In December 2023 we held our second story telling panel, this was made up of senior leaders such as the Director, Head of Children's Services and Head of Adult Services. The stories shared and discussed at this panel were of a variety of themes such as the experiences of children in foster care, direct payments, adult self neglect and returning to birth parents. A summary of the findings and recommendations will now be developed and individual feedback to the individuals of the stories discussed at the panel.

What Matters Monthly Sway

In December 2023 we launched our own What Matters monthly sway, this bulletin is intended for all staff across Children and Adult Services and will feature key information for practitioners on relevant research, training or learning from reviews. The sway will be themed each month to a relevant topic, we have plans in 2024 to highlight Foster NPT, World Social Work Day, wellbeing of staff and those individuals we support, Mental Health awareness, Black History month to name a few! Members can request the link to view the sway from m.weaver@npt.gov.uk, the link has not been included within this document as it will be in the public arena and there may be identifiable information contained within the sway.

IMPACT Award

We were successful in this quarter in applying to become a demonstrator host site for an exciting research project focussed on re-balancing services away from a crisis focus towards greater prevention, community-based support and early intervention. Owing to previous research bid success (NIHR funding – Championing a Research Culture) which has firmly put Neath Port Talbot on the map, we took the opportunity to start paving the way for the next innovative research and development initiative. What this will bring to Neath Port Talbot is:

Senior Improvement Coaches:

IMPACT employs a pair of senior improvement coaches to work with a local area to support a strategic, evidence-led change project. Each coach will work 50% full-time equivalent for one year.

Between them, the coaches bring skills in terms of strategic change management, lived experience and/or practice knowledge. They also support a local evaluation and work to influence national policy and practice.

Demonstrator Staffing & Budget

IMPACT will recruit and fund the coaches, who will be based in NPT. Staff are typically employed by one of IMPACT's partner universities (Ulster, Cardiff, Stirling, Birmingham or Sheffield). However, they also actively welcome secondments from people in policy and practice or from user- and carer-led organisations.

Whilst supervision and management are provided by the relevant IMPACT delivery lead, there will be a named contact in NPT for discussion and support with any day-to-day issues. Salary and expenses will be paid by IMPACT. A laptop can also be provided for each staff member if one isn't available locally.

Each project also has a budget to enable additional participation of people whose voices are seldom heard, and to get lessons learned into national policy and practice.

NPT will then provide:

- provides office space and enables access to local IT/systems,
- commits to principles of co-production/staff engagement,
- will have senior support and agrees to learning be shared with others
- carries out an evaluation with support from the Demonstrator team
- This can be a really good opportunity for a local person to develop their CV and gain new skills, working with the full range of expertise available within IMPACT's partners.

Amnesty UK – Lived Experience Event

Amnesty UK have run 11 community events across the 4 nations in order to collect lived experience from people in poverty; this will be used to inform their work strategy regarding poverty and human rights.

Awel Y Mor Primary School hosted an event in November 2023. The event was co-organised with Social Services and newly formed Tacking Poverty team.

The 'Lived Experience' event was in three parts:

- Day 1 (AM) – People with 'lived experience' of poverty
- Day 1 (PM) – Practice workers (who work with people
- Day 2 (AM) - Service and Resource Managers who have ensure their service is responsive to the challenges of poverty

The event involved around 20 people with experience poverty, e.g Parents, Members of our Local Gypsy Traveller Community, Young People who have Care Experience, People who have caring responsibilities.

The report is currently being drafted and will be shared with the 11 host projects prior to the final report being published in April 2024.

Quality Assurance Activity

Within this quarter there continues to be audit activity undertaken across the directorate, the findings of which will support the development of the new IT system and will inform practice through sharing areas for development and positive practice.

In this quarter we continue to audit the quality of plans across the service, we focussed on the plans developed by practitioners since receiving 1 day training on outcomes. By targeting our audits to look specifically at the impact the training has had on the quality of the care plans provides us with a rounded view on where to focus the training on next. Findings from the audit revealed that we are seeing a positive difference in a number of areas of the plans, such as being in the voice of the individual, evidence of co-production and it being clear what needs to happen. We evidenced some really well written plans, it has highlighted that the training is being embedded and we need to continue to get the key messages to practitioners on outcomes in the future training sessions to strengthen the consistency.

We also reported on the findings of the domestic abuse audit which feeds into the NPT Response to Domestic Abuse Report. A summary of the findings of this audit were:

- Within the audit sample, most families were where parents had separated however the next highest category was where parents were still living together. Families were mostly from a white/British background although four of the audit samples were from other ethnicities.
- There was a range of ages on the children within the audit sample, however the majority of children were under the age of 7 who were being exposed to domestic abuse.
- Other presenting issues aside of the domestic abuse within the family were mostly in relation to substance misuse and mental health difficulties.
- There was a balance of the cases that had proceeded on a criminal basis, and those that had not progressed through that route.
- Whilst there were a few cases where a disclosure on the abuse had been made to another professional, most were identified through a police incident that resulted in a Public Protection Notice (PPN).
- None of the cases sampled within the audit showed the domestic abuse as being a new event, all evidenced that the abuse had been ongoing for over 2 years.
- There was a vast variety of interventions that were offered to the audit sample, more common interventions were Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), Calan DVS (domestic violence service) and Family Action Support Team (FAST). Evidence showed that practitioners were involved in the cases who had specific expertise or training around domestic abuse.
- There was very limited interventions undertaken with the person causing the harm, if any were undertaken this was on a statutory basis e.g. probation.
- There was also limited work undertaken with the children within the household, however it is noted that many of the children were under 7.
- There was limited evidence of the abused adult receiving any assessment in their own right, however mental health services were accessed for those that needed it.
- Most of the cases sampled were discussed at Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), it was not always clear of the evidence of any impact of this although in some cases IDVA became involved at this point.
- There was limited evidence of the voice of the child within the cases audited.
- There was some evidence of the views of parents, but this was mostly the views of the mother, there should have been more work undertaken to gather the views of both parents/partners.
- Thresholds were reported to be good in the majority of the cases audited with good evidence of partnership working on cases. There was no evidence of any partner challenge or worry

about the progression of any of the cases, although there was one instance of IDVA challenging the Police on a case.

The learning from this audit sits within a wider piece of work in which an action plan will be developed to look at the points raised within the review, this work will commence in 2024.

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