



Collaborative Commissioning Support Unit – May Briefing Note

28/04/2008

Children's Services Projects owned by the County, Unitary and Health Authorities in the South West and supported by LIFT SW and DCSF

Summary

This is one of a regular series of briefing notes for those involved in Children's Services projects in the South West describing the activities of the Collaborative Commissioning Support Unit (CCSU). Please forward it to any other interested parties.

Work on SEN placements is progressing rapidly all over the region. A well attended Provider Forum made progress on considering how to achieve and demonstrate outcomes.

Key People

The Commissioning Forum membership address list is on the LIFT SW website.

Commissioning Forum

The next meeting will be held on the 22nd of May at the Cleve Hotel Wellington, starting at 09:30 and ending with lunch at 13:00. The theme is working with Health. Poole, Dorset and Bristol will help the discussion. The meeting will also work on the ambitious new programme for the next three years with resources available for authorities to receive help on commissioning, improvements and savings. [The last meeting of the year will be held on 18 September.](#)

SW Region Provider Forum

The meeting on 18th April was well attended and heard how Providers can evidence Quality and Outcomes and so demonstrate value for money. Presentations have been placed on the website and include Outputs, Outcomes & Impacts from Claire Dorer and Tracy de Bernhardt Dunkin of NASS, Quality Assurance from Andrew Rome, and from the Peninsula a pilot outcome measurement project. Three Providers gave brief presentations of notable practice. [The second meeting in 2008 will be held on 23 October.](#)

Children's Services Supply Base Management System

The work on the updated CRPD is progressing well. The new database will be easier to use and will support improved monitoring processes. The 10 authorities who belong to the CRPD are now completing the 07/08 monitoring visits and Exceptional Fee consultations. The CRPD newsletter is on the website.

Information on Providers and Placements across the region in both Social Care and Education has been gathered onto spreadsheets and is available to commissioners via the website or by a phone call or e-mail. An information toolkit to aid commissioning is almost complete and will also be placed on the website. The Annual Placement Survey has been extended from SEN to include Social Care and Health, and this year includes Independent Fostering placements. Returns are almost complete and will be issued soon. Later in the year the usual benchmark document will be produced.

Improvement and Efficiency Projects

The Northern Group list of pre-qualified suppliers of Residential Care is in use.

The Peninsular Placement Tendering Group covers all Social Care and some Education placements in Devon, Torbay, Somerset, Plymouth & Cornwall with individual placements made by tender against a needs and outcomes statement. The tender for pre-qualification is now closed and tenders are being evaluated. The process to extend into SEN placements using the pre-qualified list has been agreed and initial placements are being made. This will be discussed further at a conference for Peninsula providers on 12th May.

The Eastern Group SEN Residential Schools Placement Project (nine authorities) is led by Gloucestershire and will develop new relationships with Independent and Non-maintained Special Schools. A meeting for stake-holders is being held on 30th April and has been widely advertised. An invitation to tender to join a pre-qualified list will be issued in early May and advertised in OJEU and other places. A draft Pre-Qualification Questionnaire has been drawn up. It is important that Independent and Non-maintained Schools engage with this activity and those that do not do so will be disadvantaged in future – URGENT ACTION IS NEEDED if you have not yet engaged.

Five authorities are taking part in a **project to tender Independent Fostering Placements**. This project will use the new National Fostering Contract planned for launch in September.

And Also

The draft delivery plan for a further programme to be funded by the LIFT SW RIEP has been drawn up with Directors of Children's Services and submitted to the RIEP executive. The new programme is more ambitious and far reaching than current work and has additional funding. New areas of work include Capacity Building within authorities based on the priorities identified in Local Area Agreements, assistance with Commissioning, and new Efficiency and Improvement projects. A new Programme Board to be chaired by David Taylor (DCS Somerset) is being convened to develop a governance structure which will have closer links to the DCS group and other key partners.

The new **National Fostering Contract** is developing well with drafts on the ECM website. Consultation events are being held currently.

Deloitte and Touche on behalf of DCSF are carrying out a national investigation into the **future of Secure Accommodation** which is expected to report soon.

Information on the Website

The LIFT SW website (www.swce.gov.uk) has been revamped and the content improved. Follow the Service Area Support tab to Children's Services where Useful Papers and Documents, and Case Studies (tabs on the left hand side) are helpful. These are continually being added to – flag up anything particular that you need. The main Children's Services page summarises projects with details and PIDs to be found in Project Information

In the Members Area accessed from the bottom of the Children's Services page or from the Home page other documents can be found. The contact is below if you need the password. Currently the member's area is restricted to Local Authority Commissioners.

Contact

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