

Parent Network Meeting – Communication

South Cambs, 13 October 2015 (evening)

Papworth Trust, Papworth Everard

Attendees

Parents: 7

Service Providers: Richard Holland, Helen Phillips, Alison Martin, Donna Sparrow, Heidi Bartlett, Kathryn Inskip, Michelle Docking, Sian Hooban

Pinpoint: Eve Redgrave, Lenja Bell, Kari Payne

Overview

The topic for these network meetings was Communication, with an aim to gather parents' views on ways to improve communication with health, social care and education services. Parents worked in groups with providers from each service to answer three questions on communication. After the group work, each service fed back the key points which had been captured on flip chart paper and are recorded below. The parents had a chance to talk individually with each other and service providers over refreshments.

Feedback from group work

Parents and service providers were asked to answer the questions below with regard to communication methods, not about what the service provides.

1. Stop – What communication methods with Education / Health / Social Care services **do not work?**

Education

- Writing letters using difficult language to follow
- Using jargon
- Emails disappearing into a black hole!
- Keeping parents in the dark when going through tribunal, stop sending information through late at night when parents have no time to take it in / prepare for next day

Health

- Dropping us off at certain ages e.g. early support to starting school, with no apparent reason / plan

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- No linkage between school and health services (especially move to secondary school – making us feel isolated)
- No paediatrician coordinates move to adult services so dealing with GP who can't truly understand needs and overworked
- Difficult to communicate with right individuals
- Out of hours – if have crisis, it's not responsive, needs re-assessing
- Letter / postage (option)
- Being 9-5, Mon – Fri, make booking system available for phone calls / appointments
- Producing leaflets in numerous different languages for seldom used services e.g. How to complain....

Social Care

- Complicated letters to parents, not easy language
- Can things be sent by email or cloud technology, review protocols for sending emails, schools do! Give parents option – email, post, etc.
- Difficult language – short and simple e.g. look at Contact-a-Family for simpler language

2. Keep – What current ways and forms of communication **work well** with Education / Health / Social Care?

Education

- Information available on the 'web', but need to be able to clearly see who is responsible and who to contact
- Parenting courses, but look to see how to expand and extend
- Responding to emails – some good experiences
- Independent Supporters – working well
- Annual review process at school – good experience – face to face meetings to share views / concerns – enables parent to feel heard
- Time given by teacher to email / keep parent informed, especially at secondary school
- Communications from schools via email
- Paying for things online (instead of sending cheques in)
- Home to school diary
- Face to face chats – personal touch
- When you feel that the person who sent the letter knows your child

Health

- Workshops and problem solving together (parents and professionals)
- Self supporting / self help groups – supported by NHS (e.g. breast feeding)
- Hospital passport
- Community Nursing Service (but delay in getting supplier)
- Communication of best practice – share e.g. GP surgeries phoning families, costs nothing
- Texts reminder for appointments
- Phone call reminder for appointments

Social Care

- Re-starting Early Help (Short Breaks) leaflet distribution
- Knowing who to call, consistent help and continuity
- Short Break's face-to-face contact
- Sharing information – leads to smoother handovers if staff changes

3. Start – What **new methods** would like Education / Health / Social Care services to use when communicating with you?

Education

- Open meeting at schools to raise awareness of subjects such as self-harm, and services available to support / where to go for help
- School records or information as part of transition needs to be shared when child starts at next provision
- More regular time with teacher to discuss progress
- Reply / respond to a parent – SENCo at secondary school
- Language to be simpler when written – especially when sent to the young adult
- Be able to clearly link with professional who should be contacted – a phone number as well as email – ease of contact
- To have some consistency so do not need to keep re-visiting issues that have been already dealt with
- Emails need to be answered by professional, or at least acknowledged
- Parents would like to know who the casework officer is
- Keep parents informed when someone is leaving / on maternity leave
- Have a group of 'test parents' to consider / inform how to word / language to use in letters
- Provide a glossary
- Could START disseminate information from other services e.g. health, SENDIASS, Pinpoint

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- Information from schools that clearly tells parents what child is accessing e.g. interventions, therapies
- Opportunities to talk about difficulties before it goes through to tribunal and listen to parents
- Reports that come to the Local Authority need to truly capture the need of the young person
- When letters from schools are sent out hard copy with the child, make sure if child is away that they still get a letter – good to send all via email
- Making sure information is sent out in an appropriate format e.g. Tribunal bundle needs to be a hard copy from solicitor
- Let parents know options for claiming mileage e.g. scanning and emailing
- Ensuring that letter that says case is being referred to panel tells the parents why / who has asked for what
- Letter with panel decision should give detail on why, and the process, what evidence is needed

Health

- Planning for next steps and sharing plans
- Increase / improve sharing of practical interventions e.g. sleep support, motor support
- Make the right referrals at the right time
- Streamline what professionals do
- Increase use of technology (e.g. videos)
- Join up more with parents in developing services
- Continuity and consistency in approach and information
- Web-based signposting and FAQ's...Apps
- If have GP reference, need to push - no boundaries
- Joining up / sharing information between GP's / hospitals, use different systems
- Keep parents involved in professionals – school – child info
- Information before appointment – who am I going to see? What are their qualifications / position in service? What is the agenda for the meeting?
- Options for reminders: text, email, letter, what suits each person?
- Clinical feedback more important than admin
- Accessible 'choose & book' system
- What services are / are not available – clearly available, regularly updated
- Start being honest re: services available / gaps / clinics

Social Care

- Relaunch postcard with Local Offer, SENDIASS, Pinpoint

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- Connect with START and SENDIASS to promote social care and other services, handout leaflets
- Give right information to parents (individual approach), take them through it e.g. via SENCO's, support groups, school doctor / nurse, children's centres
- FIS kiosks?
- Share website when training professionals
- Automatic information from doctor when receiving diagnosis e.g. did not know about Short Breaks
- Have FAQ's
- Access to information outside of 9am – 5pm

Next Steps

The feedback from the group work will be collected and analysed across the five network meetings and shared with education, health and social service managers and frontline staff. Pinpoint will update parents on how this work is taken forward.