

## BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE FEBRUARY 2004

- 1 Workforce Planning – Overall Objective to ensure recruitment and retention of appropriately skilled social work workforce (Final report Recommendation 9.1 – Develop long term workforce plan)

<i>No</i>	<i>Improvement Key Activity</i>	<i>Benefit to the customer</i>	<i>Actions Required</i>	<i>Timescale Milestones</i>	<i>Progress</i>
1.1	Increase secondments to qualifying courses to 10 per year	Supply of qualified social workers for vacancies	1. Purchase 5 more places on courses. 2. Offer 5 more secondments.	Recruit potential secondees Dec 2003 to start Sept 2004 repeat 2005	Secondments increased to 9 this year. 23 trainee social workers recruited for training programme.
1.2	Recruit qualified social workers to fill vacancies	Supply of qualified staff to fill vacancies	1. Enhance marketing strategy. 2. Evaluate recruitment methods. 3. Policy on internal transfers.	09/03 Clear strategy agreed and in place	Staff have county-wide contracts. Job swap scheme. Internal advertising. Central recruitment team.
1.3	Protected caseloads for newly qualified staff	1. Better recruitment 2. Less turnover	More flexibility in allocation, more capacity in teams (5 f.t.e. SW posts)	09/03	Capacity increased through 5 extra posts, caseloads protected & joint working/mentoring

1.4	Incentive for mentoring new staff	Better retention and less turnover	Offer incentive to staff.	Ongoing Review 10/03	Funding in place, awaiting evaluation at end of financial year
1.5	Professional development programme	Improved quality and skills in workforce	1. Appraisal of training needs. 2. Post Qualifying Award training. 3. Clear induction programme.	Ongoing Review 10/03	Annual appraisal instigated. PQ1 & PQCCA open to all staff. Induction programme for all the trainees.
1.6	Enhance status of team manager post	Improved quality in management	1. Consider recommendations of the Hay post evaluation exercise. 2. Improve mentoring and routes into management.	Ongoing	Team Manager posts were regraded by Hay to Band D. Shadowing and mentoring into management scheme initiated.

### The Targets and Measure of Progress

- To increase the number of staff seconded to social work training from 3 to 10 by 09/2004 (Improvement item 1.1): For September 2003 the number of social work staff seconded to social work training was increased to 9.
- To reduce number of vacant posts, baseline figure to be established (Improvement item 1.2): in March 2003 the vacancy level in children's teams was 14%, this has been reduced to 8% in February 2004. Between January and December 2002, 25 social workers were recruited, in the following year this increased to 30 plus an additional 14 trainee social workers for the training scheme.

- To increase number of student placements by 5 in line with more secondments by 03/2004 (Improvement item 1.1): the Department is currently recruiting three senior practice teachers which will allow an increase in the number of student placements from the current level of 32. This will support the child care trainee scheme.
- To reduce caseloads for newly qualified staff, baseline figures to be established (Improvement item 1.3): the extra posts allocated to the children's teams in the Localities have allowed newly qualified staff to have caseloads at around two thirds of those experienced social workers in their first six months depending on the complexity of cases as well as numbers. It has also allowed more opportunities for learning by co-working cases and for staff to receive training before undertaking certain types of work particularly mandatory child protection training.
- To reduce numbers of social workers leaving within first two years of qualifying, to be monitored from exit interviews (Improvement plan item 1.3, 1.4 and 1.6): in the year January to December 2002 25 social workers left 9 of whom had 2 years or less service, the following year (January to December 2003) 28 social workers left 3 of whom had 2 years or less service. In part the increasing number of leavers reflects the age profile of this workforce.
- To achieve the national target of 75% of children commissioning social workers to achieve PQ1 level qualification by 03/2005 (Improvement item 1.5): by the end of the financial year 2002/3 61 social workers had achieved PQ1 level qualification with a further 30 candidates expected to finish in 2003/4. This is approximately 55% of the social work establishment, an additional 30 PQ1 training course places planned for 2004/5 would take the Department to approximately 73%.
- To achieve the national target of 25% of children's commissioning social workers to achieve PQCCA level qualification by 03/2005 (Improvement item 1.5): at the end of the financial year 2002/3 11 social workers had been trained through PQCCA level which equates to approximately 7% of the workforce, by the end of 2003/4 an additional 12 staff will have completed the training bringing the percentage up to 14%. An additional 12 candidates in 2004/5 would bring the percentage to approximately 22%.

2. Efficiency Developments – Overall objective to improve effectiveness of social work service for children and families.

<i>No</i>	<i>Improvement Key Activity</i>	<i>Benefit to the customer</i>	<i>Actions Required</i>	<i>Timescale Milestones</i>	<i>Progress</i>
2.1	Combine children in need/looked after teams	Seamless and flexible service	Change remit of teams for allocating work	Bassetlaw & Newark 09/03, other Localities 03/04	This has been achieved.
2.2	Equitable resource distribution	Equality of access and service standards	Undertake resource allocation exercise	06/03	This has been completed and there was a limited transfer of resources north.
2.3	Strengthen interagency partnerships	Seamless services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stronger geographical remit for the teams.</li> <li>2. Clarify and monitor expectations re. local partner liaison.</li> <li>3. Promote local multi-agency liaison and training forums.</li> </ol>	Ongoing Review 10/03	Each Locality has an additional Service Manager post dedicated to partnerships. Local forums and joint training are supported. Local Strategic Planning is supported and liaison with District Councils.

2.4	Less time on administration	More time on social work tasks	Review administrative support needs and ICT developments.	03/04	Pilot of support worker posts being rolled out across Localities. Framework operational Sept 04.
2.5	Change skill mix of teams	Flexible service to meet needs	Agree composition of teams.	10/03	Trainee scheme has changed skill mix of teams, future balance to be considered.
2.6	Reduce stress hotspots	More stable service with better quality	Flexible allocation protocols and working practices	10/03	People have moved to hotspots and work has moved away from them to maintain consistent service.
2.7	Pilot flexible working arrangements	Better retention giving better continuity	Local teams to pilot	Begin pilots 06/03 evaluate 12/03	Evaluation of pilots awaited for implementation across the Department.

### The Targets and Measure of Progress

- To reduce number of changes of allocated social worker: baseline to be established (Improvement item 2.1): the current Known Person Register computer system is unable to identify changes of social work but this facility will be included in the new Framework system. The change to combined CHIN/LAC teams will already have impacted on numbers of changes in allocated social workers.

- To reduce number of vacant posts in children's commissioning teams: baseline to be established by 03/2005 (Improvement item 2.6): the vacancy level in children's commissioning teams has reduced from 14% to 8% over the past year.
- To reduce sickness absence in children's commissioning to Departmental average by 03/2005 (Improvement item 2.6): the percentage of time lost to sickness absence for children's commissioning fell to 6.10% in November 2003 compared with 7.60% for the whole Social Services Department that month.
- To reduce the number of changes of social worker per annum for each long term case (Improvement plan item 2.1): current numbers to be established: the current Known Persons Register computer system is unable to identify this information but it will be a reporting facility in the new Framework system.

3. Out of Hours Services – Overall objective to improve value delivered by the service.

<i>No</i>	<i>Improvement Key Activity</i>	<i>Benefit to the customer</i>	<i>Actions Required</i>	<i>Timescale Milestones</i>	<i>Progress</i>
3.1	The Out of Hours service targets need (Recommendation 9.14 – needs led service)	Responsive service in high demand period	Flexible shift patterns	Ongoing six monthly review Report 10/03	Currently testing out flexible shift patterns and reduction in sessional staff.
3.2	Corporate customer service centre (Recommendation 9.15 – customer centre integration)	Swift initial response to calls	Integrate development with existing service	Pilot to start April 2003 Review 10/03	Social Services will no longer be part of this provision.
3.3	Monitor and risk assess management needs	More efficient use of resources	Review management needs in light of developments	Ongoing six monthly review Report 10/03	Exploring options for changes in management arrangements.

The Targets and Measure of Progress

- To reduce expenditure on sessional staff and overtime by 60% by 03/2005: the Emergency Duty Service is currently reviewing all areas of how it delivers its service including length of shifts, number of shifts per week, overlap with daytime services and the fluctuating demand over the week. The changes will have an impact on the use of casual or relief staff and overtime payments with the target to achieve savings of between £41,000 and £52,000 in the financial year 2004/5.

4. Social Work Posts in CAMHS – Overall objective to provide clearer focus for service in line with corporate objectives.

<i>No</i>	<i>Improvement Key Activity</i>	<i>Benefit to the customer</i>	<i>Actions Required</i>	<i>Timescale Milestones</i>	<i>Progress</i>
4.1	Define objectives and outcomes for CAMHS (Recommendation 9.17 – service level agreement)	Effective collaboration of services for children in need	Service level agreement between health and social services	10/03	CAMHS strategy is developed through DAMHS Inter-agency Strategy Group. Local SLA's to follow.
4.2	Dedicated management for social work posts in the North. (Recommendation 9.18 – team manager in north CAMHS)	Efficient use of social work time	Establish half time specialist team manager post	06/03	Team Manager post created and filled.
4.3	Target deployment of social work posts (Recommendation 9.19 – clear roles)	Effective use of social work time	Agree roles targeting looked after children and children in need.	10/03	2 extra SW posts created in the north and targeted for looked after children and children in need.