

## Item No: 9

Meeting Date: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018

### Glasgow City Integrated Joint Board Public Engagement Committee

**Report By:** Pat Togher, Head of Children's Services North East HSCP

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#### FAMILY GROUP DECISION MAKING (INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT )

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To update IJB Public Engagement Committee on the implementation and interim evaluation of Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Service in the North East locality.
<b>Background/Engagement:</b>	The FGDM service was formally introduced to North East Glasgow Children's Services in March 2017 as a pilot following an extensive scoping and recruitment exercise. Considerable engagement with Edinburgh City Council and North Lanarkshire Council have helped shape and deliver the Glasgow model as well the positive influence of research base which credits FGDM as a mechanism for culture change towards community resilience and family empowerment.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>The IJB Public Engagement Committee is asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) note the contents of this report;</li> <li>b) note the progress made; and</li> <li>c) note and approve strategic direction of travel ensuring benefits of Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and Extended Family Network Searches (EFNS) are maximised.</li> </ul>

#### Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

The IJB Strategic plan outlines 5 key priorities that apply to all HSCP services. The commitment to the FGDM approach is relevant to:

- Early Intervention and Harm reduction.
- Providing greater self determination and choice.

- Shifting balance of care.
- Enabling independent living for longer.
- Public protection – including keeping young people safe from harm.

### Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

<b>Reference to National Health &amp; Wellbeing Outcome:</b>	All 9 outcomes are associated with this report
<b>Personnel:</b>	FGDM is dependent upon skilled and trained staffing resource. Continuous improvement and utilising existing resources to enable change is a strong feature of the children's transformational change programme.
<b>Carers:</b>	FGDM promotes families as the greatest utility enabling extended family members to support and where necessary care for children and young people at risk of coming into local authority care. Potential carers will receive support wherever it is required.
<b>Provider Organisations:</b>	The success of FGDM is dependent on the broader family support arrangements provided by third sector and universal services across the HSCP. This remains key to its success and prevents unnecessary pressure on statutory services.
<b>Equalities:</b>	Promoting the needs of families and young people are explicit outcomes for the partnership and underpins commitment to Equalities Act (2010). This sets out the public sector general duty requiring public sector bodies to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination victimisation and harassment, advance equality and opportunity and foster good relations.
<b>Financial:</b>	Initial financial investment are detailed in the FGDM interim evaluation report and are mitigated by the efficiencies gained from the model specifically in relation to the reduced need for high cost care placements and capitalising on potential kinship arrangements.
<b>Legal:</b>	Children Young Peoples (Scot) Act (2014) Part 12 (Relevant Services in relation to children at risk of becoming looked after (Scotland) Order 2016. Article 8 Right to family life ECHR.

<b>Economic Impact:</b>	Adopting approaches which seek to intervene earlier and reduce/mitigate risk is more cost effective than addressing the consequences.
<b>Sustainability:</b>	Efficiencies gained from the model has afforded sustainability and helped evidence need for service expansion locally and city wide.
<b>Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:</b>	None
<b>Risk Implications:</b>	Risk of not adopting model may undermine core components of transformational change agenda associated with family support. Non-compliance with legislation in the case of FGDM may weaken position in the event of legal challenge.
<b>Implications for Glasgow City Council:</b>	None
<b>Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow &amp; Clyde:</b>	None

## 1. Background

- 1.1 FGDM is a strength based approach which seeks to mobilise families towards a sense of empowerment ensuring children/young remains central to the decision making process.
- 1.2 Interest in the potential of FGDM and its value in Children's Services was recognised by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Review of Social Work. The report from this review, *Changing Lives*, emphasised the need for social work services to work more effectively in partnership with service users, extended families and communities, recommending that social work services '*must build individual, family and community capacity to meet their own needs*'
- 1.3 FGDM is expected to be effective in two ways:
  - Enabling the wider family to be fully involved in decision making and planning for children
  - Achieving better outcomes for children
- 1.4 FGDM can also play a significant role in promoting kinship care placements and can enhance the experience for all those involved ensuring comprehensive support plans match the complexity of the situation achieving greater placement stability.
- 1.5 GCHSCP currently supports 1318 children/young people living in formal kinship care arrangements. These children are looked after by 1017 Kinship Carers with an annual budget of £8.1 Million.

- 1.6 Local analyses has highlighted the stability and longevity of kinship placement with 81% of children having been in placement two years or more and 53% of children having been in placement for four years or more.
- 1.7 Evidence also informs that placement breakdown in kinship care is also significantly less when compared with other forms of care enabling children to have consistent care with known family members supporting sense of identity and maintaining lifelong links.
- 1.8 In a Glasgow context FGDM is a neat fit within the whole system transformational change agenda, reflects the principles of GIRFEC and seeks to capitalise on family networks by ensuring children and young people remain in their communities supported by their families.

## **2. Implementation**

- 2.1 Considerable emphasis was placed on the implementation of the FGDM program which has been validated in the interim evaluation. This included a 12 month scoping exercise complimented with stake engagement sessions with education, SCRA, third sector family support and local kinship groups.
- 2.2 The FGDM pilot team has also developed a close working relationship with Edinburgh City HSCP who shared their implementation experience and provided guidance and assistance wherever necessary.
- 2.3 Emphasis was placed on the recruitment of the team lead by the designated service manager supported with information sessions detailing the objectives of the model and the expectation of FGDM coordinators. Local interviews were held for social work staff and team leaders ensuring competencies met the requirements for the new model.
- 2.4 In December 2016 North East Children's Services formally deployed 4 QSW, admin support and half post TL from existing resource. An initial investment of £70k was provided to third sector in which to support the transfer of stable kinship cases which created capacity to concentrate on the introduction of the FGDM service.
- 2.5 In accordance with the supporting literature it was agreed that the team would be located in a building deemed to be 'neutral' from a statutory social work environment. Cairnbrook education and Learning Centre in Easterhouse was confirmed as the most appropriate venue.
- 2.6 It was also recognised that the FGDM coordinators independence from statutory responsibility is a cornerstone of the FGC practice. Whilst this remains an extremely important aspect of the model it was equally agreed that the strength of relationships with care managers are fundamental to its success.
- 2.7 In this regard appointed care managers would define 'bottom line' scenarios in agreement with the FGDM coordinator detailing the threshold of risk which could not be tolerated by a FGDM action plan.
- 2.8 All FGDM staff completed formal FGDM training delivered by Children 1st and validated by Robert Gordon University. Funding was provided by the LAAC education attainment budget.

- 2.9 The introduction of the model was facilitated by monthly steering group meetings chaired by local head of service ensuring practice/finance governance, project implementation and detailed performance reporting.
- 2.10 Research and development resource was secured from the outset of the program until the completion of this interim evaluation report offering objectivity and impartial overview of the findings.
- 2.11 During the introduction of the model staff were mandated to pursue FGDM as a matter of routine prior to recommending a period of accommodation via the Children's Hearing. This position reflects the legislative requirement as defined in Part 12 of the Children Young Peoples (Scot) Act 2014 which deems FGDM as a 'relevant Service' and should be deployed as a means of early intervention.
- 2.12 The following profiles of young people were considered priority during the pilot;
- Children/young people on the 'cusp of care'.
  - Pre birth child protection case conference.
  - Young people in care for up to 6 months with no existing rehab plan.
  - Young people in high cost care residing outside Glasgow.
- 2.13 Alongside the launch of FGDM we have introduced Extended Family Network Searching (EFNS) and Lifelong Links using a genealogical approach to source and build or 'rebuild' relationships with 'kin', friends or family for children and young people who are looked after and accommodated.

### **3. Progress**

- 3.1 Interim evaluation details extensive progress during the early stages of implementation (Dec 2016- Sep 2017) however recognition must be applied to the limitations of this. Plans are underway to maintain a strong focus on the evaluation beyond the pilot period.
- 3.2 During the reporting period 118 Extended Family Network Searches (EFNS) were completed. In total, 1929 family members were found who had not been known to SWS previously. This has substantially improved the scope for utilising family members in support of young people.
- 3.3 During the reporting period the FGDM received 290 referrals with a break down of referrals detailed in table 2 of the evaluation. Almost half of referrals were for children who were not looked after or accommodated at the time of the referral. This reflects the main reason for referral, with 'prevent accommodation / cusp of care' and 'vulnerable babies' making up more than half of referrals
- 3.4 The interim evaluation reflects the contribution FGDM has made in complimenting the transformational change agenda towards family/community empowerment with a strong commitment from families and workers alike.
- 3.5 The projected annual savings are £640k which is a 'minimum' cost saving based on cheapest form of alternative care provision (provided foster care provision) and does not include on costs associated with transport and workers time.

- 3.6 In recognition of the teams commitment the FGDM team were nominated winners of the Scottish Social Work Services Team of the year award 2018.
- 3.7 FGDM and EFNS roll out across remaining two localities South and North West have now commenced based on success of model.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 The IJB Public Engagement Committee is asked to:
- a) note the contents of this report;
  - b) note the progress made; and
  - c) note and approve strategic direction of travel ensuring benefits of Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and Extended Family Network Searches (EFNS) are maximised.