

APPENDIX 4

Process changes put in place in 2007 and initial outcomes

1. **Prevention via multidisciplinary work in the area teams/creation of area panels**

Since April 07 multidisciplinary area panels are in place and meeting regularly in each of the three geographical areas of the City. This has resulted in closer scrutiny of children who are on the cusp of care and more creative support packages are now routinely being put in place to avoid the necessity of a care placement as the option. Clear guidance and leadership has been given to staff to consider extended family options when children cannot continue to live within their nuclear family. Work is ongoing on the interface between the area panel process and citywide services and on creating a robust audit trail to monitor outcomes for children who have been diverted from care.

Work is also underway with colleagues in the Under Fives teams to develop both Children's Centres and childminding services that can target and support those families where children are most at risk of entering the care system or as part of a rehabilitation programme.

The Parents of Children at Risk (POCAR) initiative is also now up and running providing fast track and integrated services for parents who are misusing substances. Positive outcomes for some very complex families are beginning to be achieved.

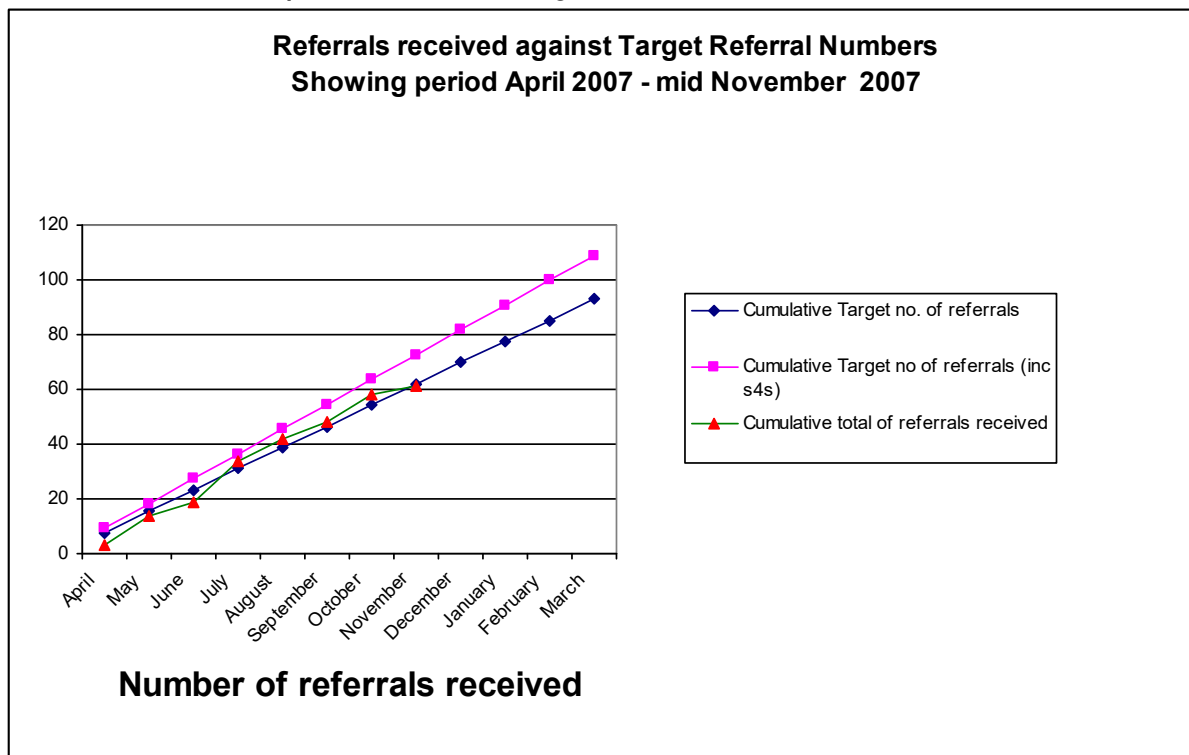
Of those clients who have successfully completed the program to date;

10 children	Placement with parents under Interim Care Order (ICO) (Previously children placed in foster care)
3 children	Discharged from ICO and returned to parental care
3 children	prevented from entering care system (currently on CPR)
3 children	Returned to parent's care following placement with family member (Voluntarily accommodated under Sec 20 Children Act 1989) and name removed from Child Protection Register
1 child	Discharged from Mother & Baby Unit and name removed from Child Protection Register
136	Total number of children in households where parent has been or is currently on POCAR program

2. **Alternatives to care building on the Family Group Conferencing model already in place and also using a strengths based assessment model**

The contract in place with Daybreak, a voluntary sector partner, for the provision of Family Group Conferences has been consolidated and extended using a combination of funding from the Children's Fund,

Sorted for School and the Children's Services Grant. The data available from this project is beginning to show good results and to be facilitating a cultural shift so that staff routinely refer now for FGCs and consider extended family options, this direction of travel will be supported in the forthcoming Court protocols due to be implemented in April 08. The shift in referral patterns from the teams in general and from the Royal Alex Social work Team in particular is striking.



In the first two quarters April to September 07, 27 families with 42 children were involved in an FGC with 98% of children who were subject of FGCs remaining with their families i.e. 41 of those children.

A pilot to implement the Signs of Safety model, a strengths based assessment model suitable for use in social work teams, has also been negotiated and work is underway to train and support staff in this way of working in the West Area using expertise from the Clermont team.

3. Pre birth and parent and baby assessments

Ongoing high numbers of babies continue to be born within the City to families that cause concern. Many of these babies are born premature and substance dependent and begin life needing to be detoxed. A process known as baby RAP is now in place and meeting regularly, involving midwifery staff, health visitors, social workers from the RACH, from the Concurrency team and from the Clermont Unit and staff from Daybreak so that assessments are carried out swiftly and as early in the pregnancy as possible, bringing in extended family options so that the need for proceedings to be initiated at birth is minimised. In line with the recommendations in the Blackmore report, this development has

effectively moved Clermont further down the system so that assessment and intervention takes place at an earlier stage.

4. Post 16 services

The numbers of young people post 16 in expensive agency residential placements has fallen as the result of careful attention to individual care plans and this has resulted in a significant reduction in the overall budget position. Young people who are ready and wanting to move towards more independent living options have been facilitated to do so. Care leavers are seen as a priority group within the Youth Homelessness Strategy and negotiations are well advanced with colleagues from Hove YMCA and Housing and City Support to look at extending the number of supported accommodation places available in the city. A very good and cost effective contract is in place with Pathways to Independence who support UASC young people,

5. Foster care

Recruitment activity for foster carers is now targeted to focus on recruiting carers who will offer parent and baby placements, placements to teenagers and to sibling groups since all of these subgroups of need have tended to result in a referral to an IFA in the past. Capacity in carers for all three subgroups has improved. We also have a specialist worker in place to recruit carers from BME backgrounds. Successful negotiations have taken place with both East and West Sussex to purchase any spare capacity from their foster carers and residential units. Discussions have been had with colleagues in the IFAs to ensure that long term carers are supported to move to SGOs where appropriate

6. CAF

Development work on CAF is now underway and will be rolled out initially in the Under Fives services so that better support packages are in place at an earlier stage.

7. Assessment

Progress on achieving timely assessments within the social work teams is good and improving.

8. Policy on financial support

Work is underway on revision of the policies on Residence Orders and Special Guardianship Orders so that a more coherent and cheaper system of financial support can be put in place.

9. Legal proceedings

Decisions to initiate legal proceedings, to use counsel or to commission experts are now taken at a more senior level and discussions have taken place with colleagues in Legal Services to put in more control over spending on the budget in that area.