

Family Justice Network

FAMILY JUSTICE NETWORK – WALES

ACTION PLAN

Updated: November 2013

Family Justice Network

Objective	Key Deliverables (KD)	Delivery Date	Lead Organisation and supporting Partners	Progress achieved since implementation of FJN in May 2012
<p>Action 1: Improving the Instruction, Quality and Supply of Expert Witnesses for the Family Courts in Wales</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To roll out multidisciplinary learning events and establishment of LFJB multidisciplinary learning groups. 2. To review implications of PLO and its impact on pre-proceedings work; 3. To develop plans to assess feasibility of bringing expert work into the NHS. 4. MoJ commissioned consultation on expert witnesses led by Heather 		<p>Welsh Government (DHSSC) (KD1, 2)</p> <p>HMCTS/CAFCASS Cymru (KD1)</p> <p>Cardiff University Law Department (Jason Tucker, Julie Doughty) (KD2?)</p> <p>Local Family Justice Boards (Wales) (KD1)</p> <p>MoJ (FJN) (KD4)</p>	<p>Working group established, meetings held and data analysis planned (HP, CW, HS, TW)</p> <p>Inter-professional training materials developed and piloted with Gwent LFJB and dates arranged in Sept 2013 for the other LFJBs (KD1)</p> <p>Evidence that use of experts is reducing is seen in the HMCTS data (KD2)</p> <p>Positive feedback from learning events and liaison with LFJB areas; (KD1)</p> <p>An expert standards document has been out for consultation coordinated by MoJ (KD4)</p> <p>The advice already provided on commissioning expert reports informed the consultation on changes to FPR and</p>

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	Payne			<p>PD25A</p> <p>Generally positive comments from consultation responses so far – responses being processed by MoJ; (KD4)</p> <p>Positive discussions and work with Expert Witness bodies, especially British Psychological Society, about implementing Expert standards and improving use by improving quality and focus of instructions.</p> <p>The Joint response to the consultation issued on 08 November.</p>
<p>Action 2: Identifying and monitoring key data available across the family justice system to inform performance improvement</p> <p>Stage 2 will involve working closely with the Local Family</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To establish a sub group, to include representatives from ADSS Cymru, CAFCASS Cymru and HMCTS to monitor pan Wales data. 2. Sub Group to draft terms of reference and a draft action plan for approval by the FJN 3. Liaise with Knowledge and 	<p>30th June 2012 (KD1)</p> <p>31st July 2012 (KD2)</p> <p>31st July 2012</p>	<p>CAFCASS Cymru / HMCTS and ADSS (KD1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)</p> <p>KAS (KD3)</p>	<p>Sub group established (KD1)</p> <p>Terms of reference drafted and agreed by FJN on 8 October 2012</p> <p>Performance sub groups have been established in LFJBs across Wales (KD2)</p> <p>Amira Irshad appointed on work placement in September 2012. Numerous reports provided to Network on data collection/analysis. (KD3 & 4)</p>

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<p>Justice Boards to secure performance improvement.</p>	<p>Analytical Services, Welsh Government to secure work placement to take forward and manage the data collection and analysis</p> <p>4. To identify sources of data across the family justice system and how or whether that data can be tracked at case / individual level and be used to inform performance improvement.</p> <p>5. To consider the above data and report on progress on developing the Family Justice workload for Wales and associated actions</p>	<p>(KD3)</p> <p>October 2012 (KD4)</p> <p>October 2013 (KD5)</p>		<p>Local Family Justice Boards consider performance at each meeting. (KD4)</p> <p>Actioned. The draft report identifying the outcomes from the data project is tabled for the July 2013 meeting. FJN commissioned final report at the meeting on 09/07 (KD5)</p>
<p><u>Action 3:</u> Review the variation in public law referrals and case completion to identify best practice</p>	<p>1. To help build further on improvements, this year is being used to transition toward the new approach for public law cases and a key part of this is the revised Public Law Outline (PLO),</p>	<p>31/03/14 (KD1)</p>	<p>CAFCASS Cymru/ADSS and HMCTS</p>	<p>The Revised PLO, issued from the President in July 2013, and is due for England and Wales implementation by October 2013 at the latest, will ensure there is a consistent and timely approach to care cases across all courts (KD1)</p>

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	<p>focusing on 'getting it right first time'.</p> <p>2. To support this, more analytical, streamlined and speedier inputs will be required from both CAFCASS Cymru and local authorities in Wales.</p> <p>3. Cardiff and Gwent LFJBs will start the new process on 02/09/13;</p> <p>4. North Wales and Mid and West Wales on 7/10/13.</p> <p>5. The revised PLO must be adopted in all court areas in England and Wales by 7 October.</p>	<p>07/10/13 (KD2)</p> <p>2nd Sept 2013 (KD3)</p> <p>7th Oct 2013 (KD4)</p> <p>07/10/13 (KD5)</p>		<p>Judicial continuity is practiced as far as is practically possible in all courts across Wales. (KD1)</p> <p>Local Authorities have reviewed continuity of social worker during cases and will endeavour to ensure that, where possible, cases are handled by one social worker (KD1)</p> <p>A small Drafting group from the Network was established to develop expectation documents for CAFCASS Cymru and local authorities in Wales, which mirrored those developed for agencies in England. (KD1)</p> <p>Local Authorities, through WLGA/ADSS Cymru, commissioned research to consider variation in referrals (LAC Numbers?) in areas of similar deprivation.</p>
<p>Action 4: Identify the key components of a</p>	<p>1. To plan for the Training of Social Workers. The approach was agreed with key</p>	<p>July – Sept 2013 (KD1)</p>	<p>Care Council Wales</p>	<p>Workforce sub group of FJN established. Plan agreed for multi-agency briefings</p>

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<p>strategy focussing on the workforce, including developing court related skills and training, for professionals in Wales to enhance the way the professions work together to provide an efficient service for children, young people and families</p>	<p>stakeholders to start with multi agency briefings</p> <p>2. To create materials to support learning for all social workers in Wales. Research in Practice (RIP) commissioned to produce a version of Evidence Matters for Wales to be completed by August.</p> <p>3. Outline details for the training course with pack, notes and materials. RIP to be commissioned to prepare this with Care Council to launch in September</p>	<p>August 2013 (KD2)</p> <p>September 2013 (KD3)</p>		<p>and taken to LFJBs for approval and discussion. (KD1)</p> <p>Plan agreed for training of social workers to cover both the new PLO and the longer term development of knowledge and skills. (KD1)</p> <p>Research in Practice - Evidence Matters material has been adapted for Wales and is being proof read prior to being sent for final publication. Training pack materials being developed for launch in September. (KD3)</p> <p>The Care Council has required all social work programmes to submit evidence on how they cover child development when they submit for approval under the new degree rules. (KD3)</p> <p>Once all the courses have submitted Care Council will consider any further action required. (KD3)</p> <p>BAAF who facilitate the IRO Wales network has met with Care Council to consider how the IRO's learning needs</p>
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				<p>can be met within CPEL. (KD3)</p> <p>The development of the preliminary workforce strategy and the development of the Intensive Course Outline and delivery plan. (KD3)</p> <p>Research in Practice’ has been funded by Care Council to produce Evidence Matters for Wales. The Care Council, have worked with RIP to prepare the content and Cardiff Law school and Heads of Children’s Services have contributed to the content. (KD2)</p>
<p>Action 5: To consider preparations for the implementation of the key reforms to the family justice system in Wales, identifying where Wales specific work will be needed to meet the requirements of the</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consideration of any regulations and guidance stemming from the Children and Families Bill etc that will need to be developed and implemented in Wales 2. Cultural change programme – the development of a Welsh statement of expectation between the key agencies, including local authorities, to 	<p>Ongoing (KD1 & 2)</p>	<p>Welsh Government (DHSS)</p>	<p>Various communications have been issued around the implementation of the Revised Public Law Outline (PLO) from the chair of the FJN. (KD1)</p> <p>Draft statement of expectation (‘Expectation Documents’) have been prepared for Wales, pending views from the President of the Family Division (to be discussed at October 2013 FJB meeting) (KD1)</p>

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<p>stakeholders and general public</p>	<p>outline the new way of working.</p> <p>3. Identifying documents suitable for publishing, ensuring that they are in keeping with Welsh Language considerations.</p> <p>4. Provide a forum for stakeholders outside the FJ system to have an input to reform process</p>	<p>21/09/12 (KD3)</p>		<p>FJN webpage bilingually established in February/March 2013. (KD3)</p> <p>FJN stakeholder event held in Merthyr in March 2013. (KD4)</p>
<p><u>Action 6:</u> Resolving private law cases out of court where appropriate</p>	<p>1. To develop a robust pan Wales FHDRA process to provide more effective gatekeeping and divert private law applications where appropriate.</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	<p>CAFCASS Cymru and HMCTS</p>	<p>FHDRA process developed, HMCTS considering proposals.</p>
<p><u>Action 7:</u> Building of greater cross-coherence</p>	<p>1. Develop a service Guide on a multi agency basis. This to include information on what services are available and how to access them. Devising a stronger, consistent multi agency communication plan.</p>		<p>CAFCASS Cymru, HMCTS, ADSS and Welsh Government</p>	<p>Email protocols agreed between HMCTS, CAFCASS Cymru and Local Authorities (KD2)</p> <p>Wales Tri-lateral meeting has agreed protocol between CAFCASS and Local Authorities around Sect 7 reporting.</p>

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	<p>Improve sharing and implementing of good practice on a “once for Wales” basis.</p> <p>2. Develop consistent “once for Wales” Protocols for information exchange</p>			<p>Protocol signed off by Mr Justice Moor and took effect from 15/7/13 (KD1)</p>
<p>Action 8: Creation of a specialist Family Legal Advisor Team within HMCTS Wales to seek to deliver improved continuity and consistency of practice across Courts and to develop a more flexible team to resource family business in Wales.</p>	<p>1. To develop a more specialist Family Legal Advisor team within HMCTS Wales, with all family specialists sitting at least 50% in family work</p>	<p>End of December 2012</p>	<p>HMCTS</p>	<p>Specialist Legal Advisor family team has been established and all in place with effect from 3rd June 2013. All Care Centres have one 100% dedicated family legal advisor located to partner DJ’s in future for gatekeeping role. All other Specialist Team Legal Advisors will sit at least 50% in family. (KD1)</p>
<p>Action 9: Monitor data in private law cases.</p>	<p>Private law cases need to be monitored across the system in order to ensure that undue pressure is not</p>		<p>FJN Sub-groups led by Gillian Baranski</p>	<p>Private law problem solving group established by HMCTS/CAFCASS Cymru (KD2)</p>

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<p>The number of publically funded Mediation Information and Assessment meetings(MIAMs) cases have reduced, private law actions have increased and a large number of legal aid certificates had been issued in March many of which have yet to filter through to the courts.</p>	<p>falling on any one part of the system A group to look at and determine the best way in which to do this to be set up, the initial meeting will comprise members of current FJN sub groups Data to include, but not exclusively, numbers of private law cases, number attending mediation, Litigants in Person, dispute resolution hearings and contact order (child arrangement order) breakdowns.</p>	<p>By end September 2013</p>		
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