

<i>item:</i>	8
<i>report:</i>	CYP23/09

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD - UPDATE

By Bill Alexander

Summary

This report updates Members on the implementation of *Getting it right for every child* across Highland, including the event held on 5 May 2009 with the Minister for Children and Early Years.

1. Background

- 1.1 NHS Highland, Highland Council and the community planning partners committed to full implementation of *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) by 2009.
- 1.2 On 5 May 2009, Highland agencies and the Scottish Government marked the achievement of this objective, with completion of the roll-out across the authority, with an event in the Council Chamber attended by practitioners, managers and senior officers, and Scottish Government representatives, including the Minister for Children & Early Years.
- 1.3 The key components of GIRFEC are now in place across the authority. Practitioners should be clear about the revised business processes and practice guidance. Change will however have to be sustained over time, and this immediate achievement will have to be reinforced through constant and consistent practice to ensure reduced bureaucracy and better outcomes for children, families and communities.

2. An overview of the changes and change process

- 2.1 The development phase took around two years from 2005-2007. It was supported by a change team, and involved a unique partnership with Government and a number of other authorities, and a network in Highland of single agency and multi-agency reference groups. We reviewed what we used to do; we examined the principles and core components of GIRFEC; we borrowed the best thinking and the best practice from all over Scotland and beyond, and we worked out how to change our practice.
- 2.2 That helped prepare for publication of the national guidance, with a model of support around each child, and Scotland's integrated assessment framework for ensuring all children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected & responsible, and included – which was first developed at a workshop in Dingwall in February 2004.

- 2.3 We moved into implementation at the start of 2008. We began by building on an enormous well of support and enthusiasm. Along the way, we managed a substantial change process, as practitioners and managers began to implement new ways of doing things – including a single child’s plan, a single child’s plan meeting and lead professional and named person roles..
- 2.4 The implementation process across all services and sectors, took around 15 months. That time was perhaps able to be condensed because of the involvement and engagement of many managers and practitioners in the two preceding years.
- 2.5 Critically, there is now an explicit pathway through services. All agencies and all practitioners should be clear about their role and responsibilities along that pathway.
- 2.6 For social workers, this has been about implementation of ‘Changing Lives’, providing a clarity of role, clear accountability, and a relationship with services users supported by a framework of child and family–centred practice tools.
- 2.7 For teachers, it has supported implementation of a ‘Curriculum for Excellence’ and the ‘More Choices, More Chances’ agenda. For health staff, it has achieved implementation of ‘Health for All 4’, and is supporting the Mental Health Framework and ‘Review of Nursing in the Community’.
- 2.8 These changes build on the key, inclusive role of universal services – of health and education - for all children and young people. That begins with the core health programme for all children in the early years, and then continues with the core curriculum and associated assessments for children in schools.
- 2.9 Achieving change has not been easy. Sustaining that change may be harder, as practitioners have been working in traditional ways for many years, and doing it in a new way just once does not change all of that.

3. Update

- 3.1 The Joint Highland and Scottish Government Project Board has met for the last time. The GIRFEC Strategic Chief officers Group continues to meet, and includes Scottish Government representation.
- 3.2 There continue to be visits to Highland from other members of the Scottish Government. Fergus Ewing, Minister for Communities, took part in a day of visits on 25 May. He observed three Children’s Hearings, met with practitioners in youth justice and substance misuse services, and met with Chief Officers.
- 3.3 The GIRFEC Change Team continue to have workplans for their particular remits, and now also support each of the Service Manager Groups (SMGs) to sustain the change process, and manage the operational delivery of better practice. This will be supported by Delivery Plans for each of the SMGs.

- 3.4 The Team will continue to support Lead Professional Training until October. Other training is taking place within schools and health settings, and assessment training is taking place for social workers. Plans also continue to be developed for the advanced course from the University of Stirling.
- 3.5 A significant training initiative around Additional Support for Learning, for schools and partner agencies, will commence later in the year.
- 3.6 The Project Manager, Marj Stewart, has commenced her 2 year secondment to the Scottish Government, but has yet to be replaced within the Team.
- 3.7 The revised Child Protection Guidance has been prepared, and will be launched at a series of roadshows in June, to which Joint Committee members are invited:

INVERNESS	5 TH JUNE 2009 (AM)	THISTLE HOTEL , Milburn Road, Inverness
SKYE	8th JUNE 2009 (PM)	AROS CENTRE, Viewfield Road, Portree
CAITHNESS	10 TH JUNE 2009 (PM)	PORTLAND ARMS, Lybster
INVERNESS	12 th JUNE 2009 (AM)	THISTLE HOTEL Milburn Road, Inverness
TAIN	16 TH JUNE 2009 (PM)	ROYAL HOTEL, High Street, Tain
FORT WILLIAM	17 TH JUNE 2009 (AM)	MOORINGS HOTEL, Banavie, Fort William

- 3.8 Work has not progressed as far as had been planned with colleagues in adult services. This will be reviewed with the Scottish Government.
- 3.9 More also requires to be done on new tools to engage with children and families, including interactive models.
- 3.10 It is envisaged that the Social Work Information System, CareFirst will connect to the multi-agency store in June. Plans are being made for schools to view these plans in Phoenix e1 from the autumn, and to be able to input plans to the store early in 2010. Implementation of the MIDIS system in NHS Highland has now commenced, as has the vulnerable persons' system for use by Scottish Police Forces.
- 3.11 We continue to work with Scottish Government colleagues to support implementation in other authorities. We have had visits in recent weeks from agencies from Moray and Edinburgh, and we have conducted significant inputs at the Annual ADSW Conference and a Scottish Government sponsored conference on the Early Years Framework.
- 3.12 While the University of Edinburgh evaluation is due for publication in the autumn, we have commenced our own consultations with children and families, to identify anecdotal evidence of change.

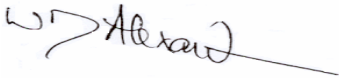
4. Future Updates

4.1 Members of the Committee are invited to consider how future updates on *Getting it right for every child* might be presented, that reflect the achievement of the roll-out, and the delivery of GIRFEC as part of normal business. It is suggested that this could include presentations and reports featuring:

- new and continuing developments;
- the consultations with children and families;
- achievements and challenges in operational practice from the Service Manager Groups
- illustrations of practice from managers and practitioners
- a significant event to mark publication of the University of Edinburgh evaluation.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee is invited to comment on the issues raised and to consider how they would wish to receive further updates now that the roll-out programme is complete.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Alexander". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bill Alexander
Head of Children's Services