CONSULTATION

1.0 Stakeholder Views

Stakeholder views have been elicited via a rapid improvement event and consultation with parents and practitioners.

2.0 Rapid Improvement Event

A Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) was carried out in June 2013 to develop a new, outcome focussed model of assessment and delivery for the provision of school-based paediatric therapy services to Surrey children and young people with SEN. An on-line survey was sent out to the following groups of stakeholders; children and young people, parents and carers, schools, area education teams, therapists and commissioners. The survey explored satisfaction with current provision and asked stakeholders to make suggestions about how SLT and OT could be improved in Surrey. Findings were supplemented by face to face meetings with stakeholders which fed into proposals to establish a new model of approach. Some of the main themes that emerged from stakeholder feedback were:

- Service is designed around the system not the child
- Services working in silos
- Things have to go wrong before anything is done
- Children who do not have a statement cannot access help
- No signposting or information

3.0 Surrey Says Consultation – practitioner and parent questionnaires

Two questionnaires were designed to facilitate consultation with practitioners and parents of children or young people with SLCN. The questionnaires built on the findings from the RIE to uncover whether or not services are currently meeting need and if not how services could be improved. An email link to the practitioner questionnaire was sent to the following groups: all primary, secondary and special school head teachers; all area education officers and school SENCOs, Virgin Care and Central Surrey Health. An email link to the parents' questionnaire was sent to all special school head teachers, SENCOs and Family Voice with a request to forward the link to parents. Hard copies of the parent questionnaire were made available and 32 were sent out with pre-paid return envelopes to special schools that made the request on behalf of their parents.

215 practitioners responded to the consultation and the key findings were as follows:

- Two out of five practitioners (42%) worked in primary or secondary schools and a further 22% worked in early years or nursery including portage;

- Three out of five practitioners (63%) felt that health and education worked well together 'some of the time' in providing speech, language and communication services. Only a quarter (24%) felt that the two services worked well together 'most of the time';

- Two thirds of practitioners (68%) felt that SLCN resources were used mainly to support children and young people with the severest needs. Over half (56%) felt that children in their early years were the greatest beneficiaries of SLC services. Only 3% felt that resources were used to support young people between the ages of 16 and 19;

- Practitioners were fairly neutral about the SLC services in Surrey with a third (33%) rating services as 'neither good nor bad', 27% as 'good' and 23% as 'poor'.

When asked what worked well seven themes emerged from the open ended responses given by practitioners:

- Professionalism, expertise and knowledge of Speech and Language Therapists
- Good joint working between Speech and Language Therapists and school staff
- Once identified and in the system good support for children from SALT
- Having the same dedicated SALT attached to school
- The required involvement of parents
- Every Child a Talker (ECAT)
- Early identification

When asked what needed addressing seven themes emerged from the open ended responses given by practitioners:

- More SALT
- Staff training and development
- Early intervention
- Threshold for children to see SALT too high
- Consistency of therapist
- Communication
- 'The system'

143 parents responded to the consultation and the key findings were as follows:

- Seven out of ten (71%) indicated that they were the ones who raised initial concerns over the SLCN of their child. A further 10% cited nursery, pre-school or portage and 6% health services;

- Three out of ten (30%) described their overall experience of SLCN as ‘good’, 22% ‘neither good nor poor’ and 20% as ‘poor’;

- More than one in three (37%) described the finding out of information needed to support their child as ‘difficult’ and a third (34%) as ‘neither easy nor difficult’;

- A third of respondents (32%) described the quality of information as ‘neither good nor poor’ and a quarter (24%) as ‘good’.

When asked what worked well five themes emerged from the open ended responses given by parents:

- Competence, quality and professionalism of SALT staff

- Early intervention / identification

- In-school service

- Special school provision

- One to one sessions

When asked what could be improved five themes emerged from the open ended responses given by parents:

- More resource/ provision

- Integrated or joined up working

- Better communication with parents

- Consistency of therapist or treatment plan

- Earlier intervention

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