

Children at the Centre: The Future for Child Welfare and Protection in Ireland

**It takes a Village to raise a
Child**

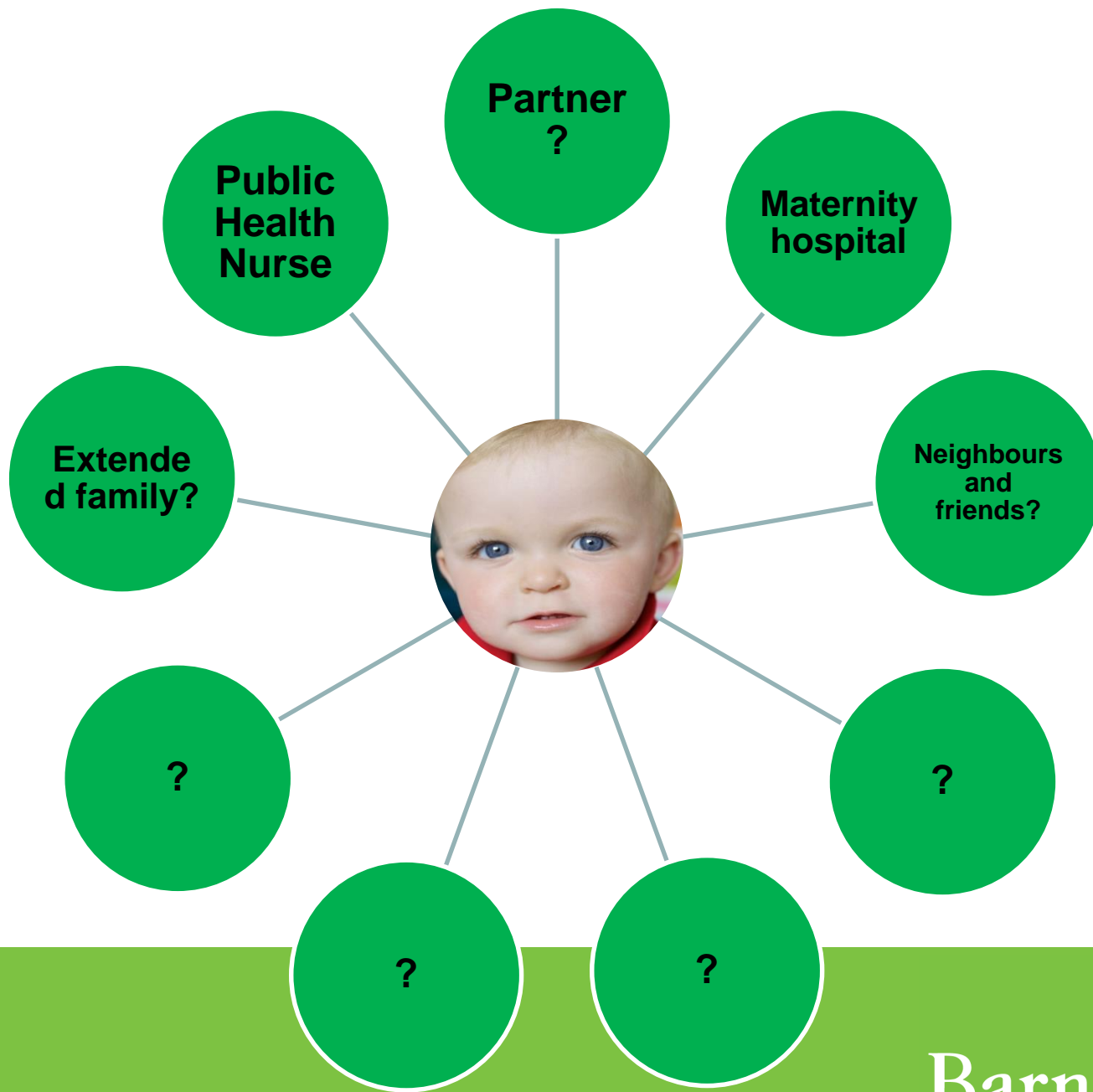
South Dublin Children's Services Committee

- Francis Chance, Assistant Director of Children's Services, Barnardos
- Mick McKiernan, Project Manager, HSE
- Lena Timoney, Senior Probation Officer, Young Persons Probation Service
- Jean Rafter, Regional Manager, NEWB
- Doreen McGowan, Child Care Manager, HSE



Barnardos

50 years working for children in Ireland



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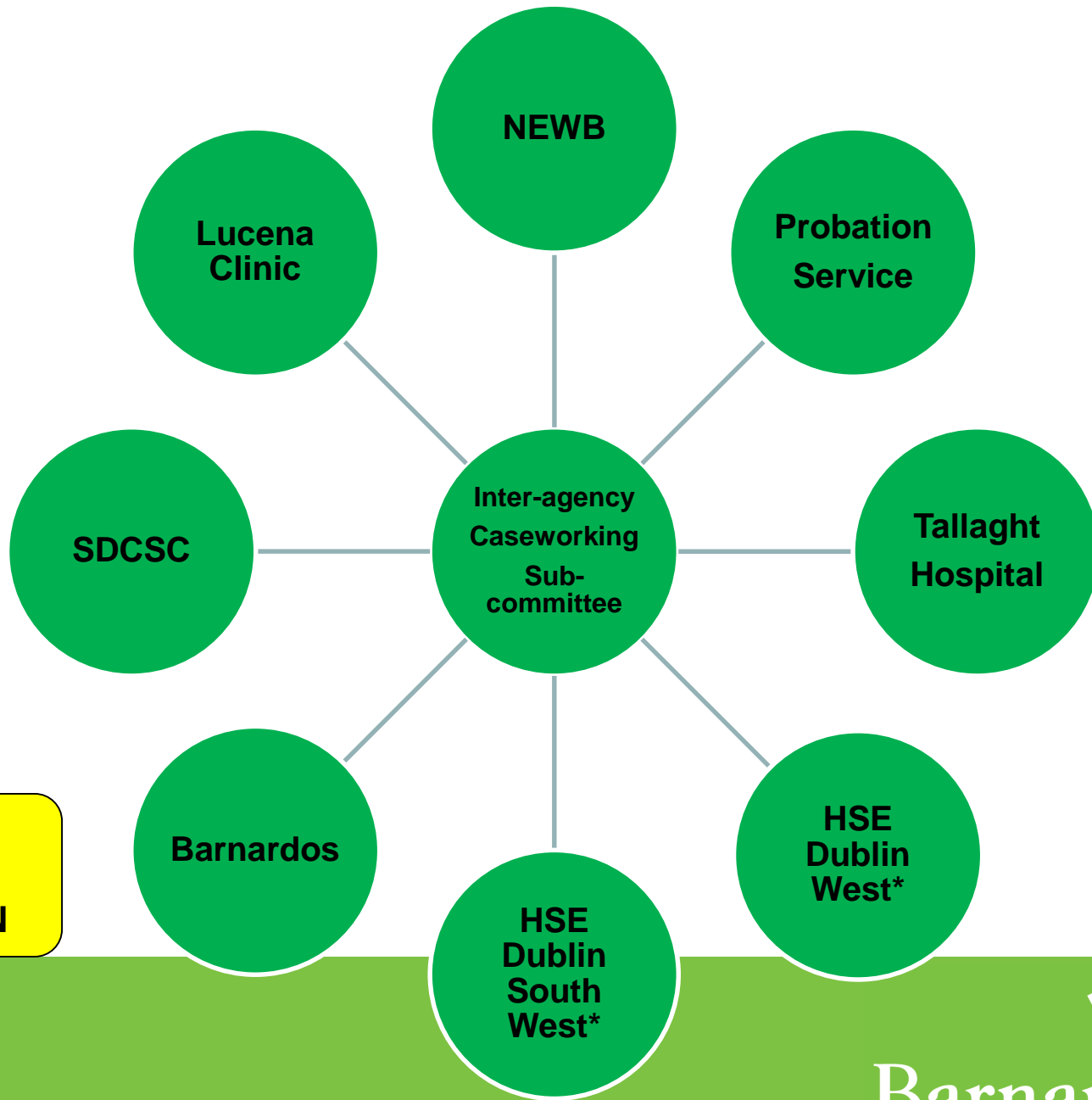


Barnardos

50 years working for children in Ireland

South Dublin Children's Services Committee

- History
- Lack of shared boundaries
- Case presentations
- Brainstorm
- Sub-group



Information Sharing Guidelines and Interagency Caseworking Protocol

- Agencies were consulted, 23 points were identified:
- Holistic,
- Clarity of roles/Lead Worker
- Mutual respect
- Good working relationships – joint working
- Information sharing families / agencies
- Contingency plans, reviews and planned closures

Purpose of Interagency Sub Group

- Develop strategies to strengthen interagency working with individual children and families.
- The issue of information/data sharing.
- A county where integrated community services cooperate to deal with all the needs of families
- Where child welfare concerns are dealt with quickly
- Increase awareness of and improvement in services.

Frontline Workers Directory

- What agencies do?
- How to refer to them
- Available on web and in hard copy to all frontline staff in South Dublin

Sharing Information about Children & Families - Best Practice Guidelines:

- Practitioners recognise the importance of information sharing and there is already much good practice.
- In some situations practitioners feel uncertain about whether it is lawful.
- In early intervention and preventive work decisions may be less clear cut than in for example child protection concerns.

Sharing Information about Children & Families- Best Practice Guidelines

- For families with complex needs to receive the services they require in an integrated and co-ordinated fashion, the effective and appropriate sharing of information between agencies is essential
- Appropriate sharing of information is a cornerstone of any strategy to improve outcomes for children

Purpose of Best Practice Guidelines

- Outline the issues regarding the sharing of information
- Encourage the seeking of consent wherever possible
- Help practitioners understand the concept of “consent”
- Outline the concept of “the vital interests of the child”
- Promote a standardized approach to sharing of information between agencies in South County Dublin

Sharing Information about Children & Families- Best Practice Guidelines

- Training and support – Killinarden & Nth Clondalkin 135 staff from 35 agencies (Feb-Nov 2011)
- Roll out across the county in 2012
- Promote National Approach

An Inter-agency Caseworking Protocol

- Families experience an integrated support package which helps them to address their needs in the most effective way possible.

An Inter-agency Caseworking Protocol

- Maximise the participation of parents and children
- Format for agencies to jointly plan, manage and review cases they are jointly involved in

An Inter-agency Case Working Protocol

Why?

The benefits of this way of working include:

- The pooling of resources
- Greater accessibility to services for service users.
- The identification and reduction of wastage of resources.

An Inter-agency Caseworking Protocol

- Clear roles, leadership and communication
- Children and families feel consulted and involved – understand their plans
- Regular reviews leading to outcomes and closures

Inter-agency Casework Protocol Pilot Phase

Pilot phase 20 cases (14 active in pilot process)

- Killinarden Tallaght and North Clondalkin
Training Feb – Dec (135 participants / 35 agencies)
- Technical support available
- Roll out to all county September 2012 onwards
- Promote National Approach

Case Study

- **Referral** :8 year old boy
- **Family History:** Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Bereavement, School Attendance, Poor engagement, Poor coping skills
- **Services Involved:** Probation, Youth Services, YODA (Addiction), Gardai
- **Services to be involved:** NEWB, HSE, FSS, Addiction Services, Mental Health, Bereavement services.
- Referral **Accepted** by committee
- **Process following acceptance to pilot**

Challenges / learning - directory

- Getting the information
- What to include / exclude
- Responsibility for CSC for services in directory
- Keeping directory current

Challenges / Learning – Info Sharing

- Getting agency sign off
- Getting buy in from own agency
- Multiple CSC protocols / national agencies – need for national approach

Challenges / Learning - Protocol

- Different organisations / different briefs
- Interface with individuals organisation policies / protocols
- Need for national approach
- Families overloaded with services
- Taking the Lead Worker/Agency role
- Family circumstances change frequently!

Challenges / Learning - General

- Differing boundaries – co-terminosity
- Interagency work needs to be resourced
- Practical tools support the work
- Need for leadership and championing
- Getting agency buy in and continued engagement
- Keeping own frontline staff informed
- Strengthened relationships – pay off for families

WEB LINKS

<http://connect.southdublin.ie/children/>

Directory:

[http://issuu.com/sdublincoco/docs/frontline_services - dublin_south?viewMode=magazine&mode=embed](http://issuu.com/sdublincoco/docs/frontline_services_-_dublin_south?viewMode=magazine&mode=embed)

Info share BPG:

http://connect.southdublin.ie/children/images/stories/datasharing/sdcscdatasharingprotocol_finaldraft%20june%2009.pdf

Casework Protocol

http://connect.southdublin.ie/children/images/stories/sdcsc_working-together_casework_protocol.pdf

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- Maria Donoghue and Patricia Wilson, SDCSC
- Mick McKiernan, Project Manager
- Theresa Barnett, HSE Children First Training Officer
- Gary Davis, Deputy Data Protection Commissioner
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