

**S.E.19 SEND Conversations - LAs, Health & NNPCF Joint Meeting**

**15th February 2022**

**12:00 - 13:30**

**Notes of meeting**

| **Local Authority/ Organisation** | **Attendees** |
| --- | --- |
| East Sussex | Rachel Atkinson (DMO) |
| Hampshire | Alistair Hines |
| Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight | Matt Powell (DCO) |
| Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight | Bex Guy (DDCO) |
| Isle of Wight | Anita Pitman |
| Kent | Rosemary Henn-Macrae |
| Kent | Paul Crulley |
| Kent | Steve Tanner |
| Oxfordshire | Catherine Clarke |
| Oxfordshire | Adeline Gibbs (DCO) |
| Portsmouth | Karen Spencer |
| Portsmouth | Liz Robinson |
| Portsmouth | Clare Poyner (DSCO) |
| Portsmouth | Tracy Fisher (DCO) |
| RB Windsor & Maidenhead (Achieving for Children) | David Griffiths |
| Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham | Sally Murray (DCO) - Chair |
| Slough | Deborah Bowers |
| Surrey | Andrea Ferns (DCO) |
| Surrey | Lisa White (DDCO) |
| Surrey | Paula Vyze (DCO) |
| Surrey | Julia Katherine |
| Surrey | Nick King |
| Surrey | Mary Burguieres |
| Surrey | Julia Foxcroft |
| Surrey | Kathrine Everett |
| West Berkshire | Jane Seymour |
| West Sussex | Helen Johns |
| West Sussex | Natalie McNeill (DSCO) |
| West Sussex | Jo Hill |
| Wokingham | Jenny Hooper |
| NHSE/I SE Region | Wendy Keating |
| Council for Disabled Children | Philippa Watts |
| S.E.19 SEND Network Co-ordinator | Tracey Maytas |

| **No.** | **Agenda item** |
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| **1.** | **Welcome and background to meeting**  Sally Murray, DCO for Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham, welcomed everyone and reiterated the online meeting protocols. |
| **2.** | **Actions and matters arising from last meeting**  The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed:   * The DfE have a list of first and second contacts for SEND for all areas, which Liz needs to keep up to date.   **25/01/2022: It was circulated and 15 replies out of 19 were received. It was suggested to send the contacts list as an attachment with the agenda prior to every meeting, for members of this group to check if their contacts are correct.**  **15/02/2022: Action completed.**   * SEND Network working groups: **Action: Tracey to contact LAs regarding who they have signed up for these meetings**.   **15/02/2022: In progress.** Tracey will send a grid with who she thinks is attending on behalf of each local area for all the groups for LAs to review.   * The pack from the DfE 'SEND Decision Making and the Law' legal training has information around placing in schools and how placing another child might have a negative impact on other children. Specifically slide 69. Tracey to share which LAs had representatives attending the legal training. 25/01/2022: Tracey to contact Mott MacDonald for list.   **15/02/2022: Action complete. If anyone else needs this list, send an email to Tracey.**   * Tracey to send a reminder of the Annual Review training on 14th February, since the South East are low on numbers of people enrolled in it.   **15/02/2022: Action complete.**   * Elaine Munro to take the discussion around managing capacity and time allocated to EPs to PEPs in the South East and feed back - to find out if there are EP services that have approached this in a different way, any ideas, any learnings.   **15/2/2022: Carry action forward.**   * An action was agreed for Tracey and Nathan to convene a meeting with South East LAs and Benedict Coffin**.**   **15/02/2022: Nathan will raise it with Benedict**   * An action was agreed for Paul Crulley to identify specific questions around their structure of tribunal teams for colleagues to answer and send them to Tracey to create a survey.   **15/02/2022: Carry action forward.**   * **Tracey to liaise with Heather Campbell about specific dates and invites for SIOD to join the SE19 SEND Network meetings.**   **15/02/2022: Carry action forward.** |
| **3.** | **NHSE/I Update - Introduction to new SE Region SEND lead, personnel changes and latest information from NHSE/I Region**  Wendy Keating, Assistant Director Nursing, Professional and Systems Development - NHSE/I, provided a high-level regional update.   * Still in level 4 response related to Covid, which is impacting business as usual. Response to Covid has had significant impact on some of the services, wait lists, access to therapies.   Vaccine guidance has been paused and re-looked at in terms of mandate. At the moment NHSE can only provide guidance in terms of vaccination of their staff as opposed of mandating it.   * Publication of the integration white paper. There are elements of SEND related to that. * Publication of elective care as well. * Planning guidance - working on business plans in relation to that. * Doing a lot of work around the health inequalities. Thinking on how health inequalities affect in relation to SEND. * In terms of staff:   Regionally, Jaqui Stillwell is on secondment and Adeline Gibbs, Sue Gibbons and Wendy are working on providing support to the region.  Nationally, Lorraine has recruited some additional SEND posts - business support and allied health professional lead.   * No update on the SEND review. There are pilots being developed for the new inspection process. * The system maturity matrix has been collated. 3rd submission is due into the region on the 13th of May. Formal communication will be sent. * Involved in feedback on CDC Local Area audit tools, ongoing until 25th of February. People can still give their feedback. There are some sessions available if they want to get into those. * NHSE/I SEND work closely with NHSE/I learning and disabilities, mental health for children and young people and safeguarding teams. As they have started to develop their team, they have been able to increase outreach and they might develop more of a matrix approach to some of this work. There is no formal organisational structure at the moment showing the matrix work. There might be something to be shared by mid/end March. |
| **4.** | **Update on DfE SEND national & regional support 2022**  Tracey Maytas, SE19 Network Co-ordinator, explained that the DBOT contract is coming to an end on 31st March 2022 and the SEND regional support will also change.  Tracey shared the update for the next 3 years that the regional co-ordinators have been provided with, highlighting that what the change will consist of exactly has not been confirmed yet.  There seems to be an expectation, although it was not explicitly confirmed, that there will be a three year wait before legislation following the SEND review.  Some of the programmes will remain, with changes:   * Targeted Performance Improvement   It will be predominantly for those Areas with Written Statements of Action or those where DfE have concerns about SEND work.  The DBOT is being replaced with a new consortium - RISE (Research and Improvement for SEND Excellence). It is going to generate research and evidence on SEND activity, translate it into practice and develop resources in an interactive digital platform. That should provide open access for everyone in terms of the result and people able to contribute.   * SEND Practice Advisers   This role will be largely similar to the current DfE SEND Adviser role (currently Liz Flaherty for SE19) although a full recruitment process is taking place. There will be 15 posts nationally.   * Sector Led Improvement Partners and LGA leadership support   SLIPs - there was an active decision made by a couple of LAs in the region that it was probably not a viable way forward.  New programmes will be added:   * Delivering Better Value in SEND   This is based on the High Needs Funding. The DfE are going to pre-select 55 LAs with an overspend in their HNF. They will be supported over three years, initially to look into what the issues are and then put a plan in place. Work coming out of that will help inform all areas on managing budget.   * SEND financial advisers   Six SEND financial advisers are being recruited to work the 55 LAs identified.   * Regional support   The support the DfE currently provide to the SE19 SEND Network is going to cease and be channelled instead through the existing Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliances, which in the SE is the DCS Soth-East Sector led Improvement Program (SESLIP).  SESLIP will continue to support the SE19 SEND Network but necessarily through having a central post, like Tracey's. More funding will bring the possibility of more capacity within the network to move things forward more swiftly.  In terms of the SE19 SEND Network, Tracey shared a draft structure:   * There is a proposal for the SEND Strategic Conversations and the Steering Group to continue. * The funding might allow SESLIP to recruit consultants to support the existing meetings and forums with greater capacity.   Julia Katherine, Surrey, remarked that we welcome the increased funding and we are pleased that SE19 is in such a healthy position to continue to take forward the support, under the new arrangements. |
| **5.** | **Update on activity by NHSE/I SEND Advisers *(Standing Item)***  Adeline Gibbs and Sue Gibbons, NHSE/I SEND Advisers, reported back on their work so far in their new roles and shared the embedded slides     * The priorities detailed will be reviewed and an update provided in the next joint meeting. * Lorraine Mulroney from the NHSE/I national team is planning a masterclass for ICS. More information will be sent in due course. * Sue and Adeline are having conversations with DCOs & DMOs to come up with plans for the Region for next year. * Waiting times: work is being led nationally looking at service restoration and deep dive work. They have contributed to that and they are waiting for an outcome from the national team. * Data collection is in process at the moment. * Still in the 'understanding' phase for the new role. They have split the region to be able to have meaningful conversations, Sue taking the north of the Region and Adeline the south. Intending to have more clarity on how they might go forward in reporting good areas of practice, collating, reporting and ensuring that data is more standardised form a health perspective. * Just come to the end of the pilot for the SEND training assurance framework. A report was received yesterday from CDC. The initial findings show a positive improvement in knowledge and understanding after accessing the basic awareness/ level 1 training.   The results will be evaluated and inform phase 2 of introducing the training framework. The e-learning has received interest nationally.   * One of the priorities was to reduce health inequalities for children and young people with an EHCP and they are looking at how health receive information about young people in custody with an EHCP. The formal process is from the youth offending teams within LAs to notify the custodial youth accommodation and the health commissioner within 5 days of the young person being detained.   They asked LA reps for any good practice in their areas. The following comments were made:   * + It was noted that not all youth offending teams are part of LAs so it will look very different according to local arrangements.   + Jo Hill, West Sussex, mentioned that they have a protocol for the youth offending team, which requires that they have a notification system where they would be advised to provide the EHCP and notify NHSE. Jo agreed to share the protocol. Embedded below. |
| **6.** | **Discussion: Impact of Staff Absence and Recruitment Challenges on the delivery of provision in EHCPs - regional experience of pressures**  Tammy Marks, who raised the query, has had to send apologies.  The following comments were made:   * A question was posed whether there is a national standard of pay structure or if there would be something that could be agreed on as a group. Replies as follows:   + There is not a national guidance. The challenge locally is that our pay scales are not aligned.   + Another challenge is that many staff work in a matrix fashion and are not full time in one role.   + Tracey reported that a survey has been undertaken by the SE19 SEND Operational Managers Group around team structures and pay scales. 13 LAs have responded. A meeting will be held at the beginning of March to finalise the report generated and the information will be shared with the SEND Operational Managers to share with their SEND leads. * Helen Johns, West Sussex, remarked that they have experienced some refusal to take children in special schools because they are unable to recruit teaching assistants. They have looked at different ways to attract people to that role. It was raised to unions and it relates to pay scales, because TAs are paid at quite a low rate. * Deborah Bowers, Slough, said that they are focusing on the development of the workforce in schools, looking at additionality and also at baselines for what a class teacher be able to do within a classroom. * **It was agreed to bring this item back to next joint meeting in May.** |
| **7.** | **SEND Review Activity; health and LAs - sharing information**  Sally explained that she attended the Health Commissioners focus group for the SEND review set up by Lorraine Mulroney.   * The expectation is that it will be published by the end of March. It will take a while to go through Parliament. * Sally felt that her group was actively listened to. She had also sent some thoughts to Lorraine in advance of the meeting. * There was a good amount of discussion in terms of demand, particularly around children unknown to services, children for assessment.   Members of the SE PfA forum have been invited to contribute with the West Sussex PfA rep and Chichester College SEND manager meeting with members of the SEND Review team. They reported back that   * They felt that how they work together is good practice but not uncommon in the South East, however the Reviewers felt it was both excellent and unusual from what they had heard previously. * There was good listening. * There seems to be determination to get the SEND review out by the end of March, but it will be a green paper which will go to consultation, then the white paper and to be signed off in Parliament.   Adeline attended the DCO group:   * Nationally all DCOs were reporting the same themes and challenges. * There was active listening as well and took a lot of notes. * The areas covered were mainly around the role of the DCO, what that role might need to look like and seeking feedback on current working. |
| **8.** | **New Joint Inspection framework - Update from latest meeting & any regional input required *(Standing item)***  There has not been another meeting, so no update can be provided. This is becoming an area for concern.  It was noted that some LAs have been asked to take part in a second round of Pilot inspections. **Action:** A request/plea was made for any SE19 LA who is a pilot to feed in after it is done, if permitted to do so. |
| **9.** | **CDC 'Recovery' workshop: Exploring & Mitigating Pinch Points in the EHCP Process; - purpose of the workshop, key learning points, outcomes & next steps**  Philippa Watts, Principal Officer (Health) Council for Disabled Children, introduced the workshop, explaining it was developed with the SE19 region specifically around identifying pinch points in the EHCP process, to try to form a comprehensive picture of challenges health and LAs are facing and what is the impact for other partners in the process.  CDC have been delivering training for EHCPs for a long time, focused on providing skills and knowledge. This session provided an opportunity to understand where the challenges are. It was used to gain perspectives from all stakeholders, interact with different colleagues, share experiences and collate the challenges.  Philippa talked to the embedded slides.    This piece of work has enabled CDC to map the different challenges/barriers, how they intersect with each other and how they link with each other. This should identify some root causes and what is needed from the system - locally, regionally and nationally - to overcome these barriers. CDC are feeding the work into the SEND review as well.  The meeting concurred that it is positive that the issue with timelines is being raised. Where timelines for providing information and advice are not aligned between education, health and social care it does not work and LAs are obliged to meet the ones in the SEND Code of Practice.  Sally remarked that feedback from colleagues who attended the workshop said that it was much needed and theraputic.  It feels that some of the elements discussed in the workshop have been the 'elephants in the room' for a long time. When demand for assessments goes up by 100% in the course of 2 years and it coincides with the pandemic, there are things that are going to create pinch points.  It was mentioned that money is not always the answer because there is a shortage of staff to recruit even if you have funding.  Philippa went through the 14 points in key barriers and solutions document:   1. Person-centred conversations 2. Lack of clarity as to who is responsible for the person-centred conversation 3. Unawareness of the purpose of the person-centred conversation 4. Advice givers not having seen the aspirations and outcomes sought from the family with the request for advice 5. Statutory timescales do not allow sufficient time for assessment 6. Advice givers have insufficient capacity to respond 7. Advice givers have insufficient capacity to coordinate and align advice 8. Advice givers are under pressure to recommend local provision rather than what is most appropriate to meet needs 9. Parent/carers lack of confidence on state-funded SEND system to meet their child's needs and see 'private' (independent) schools as better 10. Plan writers do not receive sufficiently specific information from advice givers to write SMART outcomes 11. Plan writers do not receive sufficiently specific information from advice givers to specify provision 12. Practitioners receive insufficient warning of the Annual Review 13. Practitioners have insufficient capacity to attend/meaningfully contribute to Annual Reviews 14. Annual Reviews are insufficiently person-centred   The mapping document is not finalised yet but will be shared when it is. |
|  | **AOB**   * Tri-partite funding agreements for INMSS place costs   Liz Flaherty is looking for any LA that have tri-partite funding agreements in place for young people who go into specialist private placements. An appeal was put out to contact Tracey if you could contribute.  **Tracey to forward to Liz Flaherty the names of the people who could provide her with information around tri-partite funding agreements for INMSS place costs: Sally Murray, David Griffiths, Rosemary Henn-Macrae.**   * Key stage transfer decisions deadline - sharing numbers   Nick King, Surrey, said that he would be interested in comparing their performance in terms of making the decisions for naming schools by type or naming provisions, the number they have completed on time with other LAs.  He asked colleagues if they could complete the embedded proforma.  The compiled data will only be provided to those who take part and will not be forwarded elsewhere. |
| **Future meeting dates:**   * Tues 22nd March - LAs * May? - Joint meeting | |
| **Future topics:**   * SEND Review (standing item) * New Joint Inspection framework (standing item) * Health advice and provision for C&YP EOTAS (Carry forward) * Discussion: Impact of Staff Absence and Recruitment Challenges on the delivery of provision in EHCPs - regional experience of pressures (May joint meeting)   Please send any items or questions and queries you would like to discuss with colleagues to Tracey. | |

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| **Summary of Actions** |
| * **SEND Network Working groups: Action: Tracey to contact LAs with details of who they have signed up for these meetings**.   **15/02/2022: In progress. Tracey will send a grid with who she thinks is attending on behalf of each local area for all the groups.**   * **Elaine Munro to take the discussion around managing capacity and time allocated to EPs to PEPs in the South East and feed back - to find out if there are EP services that have approached this in a different way, any ideas, any learnings.**   **15/2/2022: Carry action forward.**   * **An action was agreed for Tracey and Nathan to convene a meeting with South East LAs and Benedict Coffin.**   **15/02/2022: Nathan will raise it with Benedict**   * **An action was agreed for Paul Crulley to identify specific questions around their structure of tribunal teams for colleagues to answer and send them to Tracey to create a survey.**   **15/02/2022: Carry action forward.**   * **Tracey to liaise with Heather Campbell about specific dates and invites for SIOD to join the SE19 SEND Network meetings.**   **15/02/2022: Carry action forward.**   * **Discussion: Impact of Staff Absence and Recruitment Challenges on the delivery of provision in EHCPs - regional experience of pressures: Action for Tracey to bring this item back to the agenda for next joint meeting in May.** * **Tracey to forward to Liz Flaherty the names of the people who could provide her with information around tri-partite funding agreements for INMSS place costs: Sally Murray, David Griffiths, Rosemary Henn-Macrae.** |