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<th>Innovations in relative and kinship care : a case management model for assessment</th>
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Innovations in Relative Care

A Case Management Model for Assessment

Dr Valerie O’Brien

School of Applied Social Science
University College Dublin
My contribution to the field

- Research in the area
- Demonstration projects
- Teaching and training
- Frontline expertise
- Ongoing consultation
- Decision-making in quasi-judicial context
Assessment Challenges of Relative Care

- Emergency placement permitted which leaves full assessment incomplete
- Statutory requirement of 12 weeks to complete but time frame not adhered to generally
- HSE has Accountability to multiple stakeholders
Characteristic of current model

- Crisis in family system / HSE system
- Superimposed from traditional foster care
- Some instances of adapting tools: Form E/F and some innovations FRG tool
- Essentially two worker model with two managers involved
- Multiple roles and tasks
- Long delays in completing the task
Some reasons for the delay

• Organizational
  – Availability and use of resources
  – Case management system in place
  – Skill level

• Complexity in Network of relationships
  – Ambivalence, lack of clarity

• Policy / Legislative / Best practice / Resources / Values
Stages of Relative Care Assessment

1. **Need for care placement decided**
2. **Mobilise Network**
3. **Make emergency placement**
4. **Stat reviews**
5. **Activate family placement worker**
6. **Family network meeting**
7. **Needs appraisal**
8. **Assessment complete**
9. **Approval committee and decision**

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What do we want to do?

Law
What must we do?

Values

Policy
What should we do?

Resources
What can we do?

Context
Child needs placement

Pragmatics

- Route to care
- What is already known
- Time indicated
- Child and family wishes
- Locate emergency placement

Outcomes

- Wellbeing
- Supported
- Safety

How best to meet them
A relative care placement

How do we know we have the best option?

How do we know the child is safe?

Deal with family dynamics

Have insight to self

Understand job

Can support and will let agency support

Capacities to foster

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Overview of 12 week requirement

Agency – decision if appropriate

Decision making

Information
- Needs / capacities
- Strengths
- Vulnerabilities

Analysis
- Supports
- Supervision requirements
- Interventions — therapeutic

Synthesis
Assessment

- Not an end in itself
- Not an exact science: Predictive
- Need for honesty, clarity and work with ambivalence
- Utilise other decision making and accounting processes in system
Demonstration Project

What worked well

• Research into practice
• Tools brought forward
• Expertise in area
• Consultation / leadership
• Organisational interest

Challenges

• Policy not explicit
• Wider change reinforced 2 worker model
• Spread too widely
• Effort of champions diluted
• PC : Criteria

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Assessment needs to

• Appraise / Open up – positioning
• Clarity re expectations for meeting child’s needs
• Care plan as clear as possible
• See family as resource but agency has final decision – accountability
• Network of relationships complex
• Supports, needs, vulnerabilities and strengths

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Tasks for assessment

Child and family worker

- Care plan
- Contact
- Support children and family
- Intervention
- Assess

Locate emergency place

Child

TL (Consultation)

Case management

TL Manager

Report

Placement C

Family placement worker

3 Cs

12 weeks

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Tasks for Family Placement worker

- Child’s placement requirement
- Mobilise Network
- Emergency Placement
- Case management

- Route to care
- Activates referral
- Mobilise Network
- Family Network Meeting
- Timing – purpose

- Support
- Assessment
- Supervision
- Preparatory Training

- Change worker
- Placement app.

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Innovative relative care

Flexible

Safe

Legislation

Analysis

Collaboration
Communication
Co-ordination

Knowledge
systems complexity

Child
and Family

Understanding
and reflexive

Relationship
building

Values

Policy

Competent

Structures

Best practice

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Tools for assessment model

- Template for final report: child and relative
  - Utilise time factor, reviews
- Stages and tasks
  - Key clinical and supervision questions
  - Supervision / consultation template
- Genogram, ecomap and sociogram
- Family network meetings: purpose
- Agency and family concerns template
- Support and supervision template
- Typology of network of relationships
- Interview tools: biographical / multi media
Method

- Not end in itself: utilise review structures
- Report is synthesis of information
- Two workers: tasks and role orientated
- Family placement worker time-limited (rolling resource to ensure availability)
- Link worker
- One manager during 12 weeks period
- Assessment / intervention simultaneously:
Theory / Values

- Family Care Safe
- Needs, supports and supervision
- Systemic: circularity
- Position of agency: outside family
- Self reflexivity
- Ambivalence
Implementations

• The problem of relative care assessment
• An innovative model
• Model adaptations required?
• The potential to meet the long-term need
• The option of addressing the immediate problems faced in relative care assessment
• Retrospective application?
Managing the backlog

- Analysis of existing files:
- Pattern of Information
- Present network typology to aid analysis
- Distinguish supervision/support axis
- Appraise against care plan & review data
- Family Network meeting to address need, support, and safety
- Template for Worker and PC Report and Decision making