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Title: Permanence and Care Excellence Programme

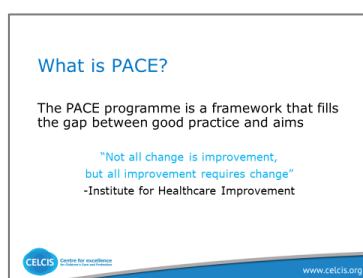
Speakers: Kirsty Doull (KD), Permanence Consultant, CELCIS
Carol Wassell (CW), Permanence Lead, CELCIS

You are watching our webinar about the PACE programme from the delivery team in CELCIS at the University of Strathclyde. PACE is a Quality Improvement programme aiming to reduce drift and delay in permanence planning for looked after children these webinars were recorded in the spring of 2020 so please be aware that key changes in legislation, guidance and practice may have occurred since this time.



(KD) I'm Kirsty Doull and I'm part of the Permanence and Care Team at CELCIS, helping to deliver the PACE programme. This is all about an overview of what PACE is and what we've learned from delivering the programme.

(KD) I'm joined today by Carol Wassell, who is the Permanence and Care Team programme lead at CELCIS and we're going to have a chat about the nuts and bolts of what PACE is and also some of the key things we have learned from delivering PACE across Scotland.



(KD) So just to kick us off then in four sentences or less, can you tell me what PACE is?

(CW) So PACE is a programme that uses a specific framework to harness and effectively implement all those things that we know about good practice for looked after children and all the things we want to achieve for looked after children, and what PACE does is it fills the gap between those two things.

Why does it so important?

- Evidence based
- Time taken to reach a decision
- **Permanent emotional, physical and legal security**



Emotional: Opportunity to build nurturing long-term relationships (including relationships with professionals)



Physical: minimum number of placement moves before child/young person is in a stable and secure home, where possible within a family setting that continues into adulthood



Legal: Legally secured permanence through removal of compulsory measures at home, Permanence Orders, Kinship Care Orders, and Adoption Orders


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(KD) Why is it so important?

(CW) So we know and the research is really clear that when children need to have state intervention and become looked after, both at home and away from home, because of concerns about their well-being, when we take too long to make decisions about children's permanent long-term emotional, physical and legal security they do less well, the outcomes for children are worse. Not all children, some children do very well but generally as a default position if we take too long to make decisions for those children - children aren't clear, and indeed their families aren't clear, about what long-term plans are then we know the outcomes tend to not be as good for those children. So it's really important that we attend, not only to securing children legally or returning them back home when they are able to do so, but that we also make sure that we are attending to their emotional and felt security with people including their families, where possible, that can care for them for the rest of their lives.

How did PACE come into being?

- 2011 SCRA published research in outcomes for Looked After Children
- Scottish Government funded CELCIS to create the Permanence and Care Team (PaCT)
- Quality Improvement (QI) and the Early Years Collaborative
- PaCT applied QI framework to improve decision making for Looked After Children
- PACE commenced in 2013

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(KD) Can you tell us a wee bit about how PACE came into being?

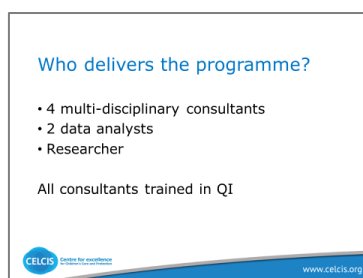
(CW) So in 2011 the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration published a fairly seminal piece of research that looked at outcomes for our looked after children and what that research found, although it was a small sample of looked after children, it found that we were taking far too long to achieve permanent destinations for children, including a permanent return home for those children who it was appropriate. So at that time, and really driven by that research, the Scottish Government funded CELCIS to create the Permanence and Care Team and we spent a couple of years going all over Scotland, meeting with local authorities and the multi-agency partners, talking to people about what was working what wasn't working and trying to support them with change. At that same time quality improvement, as a methodology for driving improvement in public services, was really starting to take hold in Scotland and at that point mainly the Early Years Collaborative were using that particular framework to drive improvement.

So the Permanence and Care Team started to use the framework of Quality Improvement to try and improve outcomes for decision making for looked after children in Scotland and it was really fairly innovative at that time because there weren't a huge amount of agencies that were using Quality Improvement, certainly

in this country, to drive improvement in social care settings it was mainly in health. So the Permanence and Care Excellence programme was born and we started with our first two local authorities at the end of 2013.

(KD) So it's been going since 2013?

(CW) It's been going in one form or another since 2013. But like all things when we first started it was very new to everybody it was new to us. We set up a number of partnerships to try and drive the work. Some of it worked some of it didn't but it was all learning, and certainly you know we all you wish you could go back and know back then what we knew today and but we didn't but you know I think as Maya Angelou said 'we do our best and then we learn some stuff and we do better' and I think if anything for my motto for the PACE programme that would be it really, that we've developed and improved the programme enormously over the last four five years.




(KD) So who is in your team delivering the PACE programme?

(CW) So at the moment we've got four consultants who have got different backgrounds: we've got social work background; we've got a lawyer; we've got somebody who has done a lot of improvement work in other areas; and we've got two data analysts, and the data analysts very much help us to gather the data that helps us make the stories of individual children pop out of the systems that we're trying to improve; and we've also got a researcher, who helps us to understand whether or not what we're doing is making an impact and to articulate the things that are working and also help us to look at those things that we need to improve on.

(KD) And you mentioned the variety of backgrounds from the consultants, but am I right and thinking that they're all trained in quality improvement as well?

(CW) Yeah absolutely, and that's really important.

- QI is a rigorous framework to address:
 - What do we know?
 - What do we want to achieve?
 - How do we drive the improvement we want to see?
- Frameworks help individuals/ organisations to take the next step to improve and measure



The diagram is titled 'Model for Improvement'. It features a central circular flow with four stages: Plan, Do, Study, and Act. Above the cycle are three guiding questions: 'What are we trying to accomplish?', 'How will we know that a change in performance is an improvement?', and 'What change can we make that will lead to improvement?'. The CELCIS logo and website URL are at the bottom.

(CW) Understanding that PACE is really just a framework that, you know quality improvement in and of itself doesn't change anything; what it provides is though a really rigorous framework by which we can take all those things that we know, all the things that we want and start to drive the improvement that we want to see.

So it's about trying to get away from certainly a bit of the magical thinking that existed for the years that I worked in social work that just by wanting it to happen and as individuals we can make improvement happen. We know actually from experience that that's not the case and that frameworks help us to take the next step into really rigorously being able to improve and measure what we do.


(KD) You've talked a bit about using Quality Improvement within PACE to work with partner agencies to reduce drift and delay in permanence planning. I just want to talk to you a little bit more about that, to really drill down to what does that look like in practice when a consultant and a data go out and about in a local authority area?

(CW) I suppose the main principle for me of using an improvement methodology is that too often authority and power sit with leaders and managers in an organisation that are kind of higher up the hierarchy but the knowledge and relationships sit with the people who are actually on the front line doing the work. So Quality Improvement helps us find a way of equalling those relationships, so we start to give some of the power and authority and responsibility to the people who have the knowledge and work with people on the front line and are actually doing the work.

Using QI in PACE to reduce drift & delay

- QI balances the scale:
 - Authority at the top of the hierarchy
 - Knowledge and relationships are at the frontline
 - PACE gives responsibility to people on the front line
- In action:
 - Why do they do something?
 - What are they doing?
 - What drives them?

Human side of change




(CW) So what that translates into action is that we go in and we do a lot of work around helping people to look at why they do what they're doing what, what drives them - the human side of change- what is it they're trying to achieve and then we break that down into different components around:

- what does your system actually look like
- what does the data tell us about how your system is working
- and what's your theory of how you're going to change to make things better

PACE and QI breaks change into:

- What does your system look like?
- What does the data tell us?
- What is your theory about what it is you will need to change to make things better?



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(CW) And we do that by asking three very simple questions

- what's your aim
- where do you want to be by when
- and how much

PACE asks:


- What is your aim?
- Where do you want to be?
- By when and how much?

How do we know change is an improvement?

- Suite of measures
- Develop a theory of what we are going to do and test

What does it take to achieve change?

- **Organisational and leadership buy-in**
- **Gather evidence and examine data**
- **Multi-agency**
- **Reduce abstraction**



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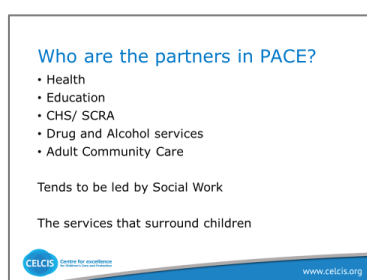
(CW) How do you know that a change is an improvement? And we do that through a suite of measures: some of that can be numerical, some of it can be qualitative, and then we develop our theory of what we're going to do to make things different for improvement and then we test that out in the real world. So we can't achieve any of that though unless we start getting buy-in from the organisations that we seek to work with and we are very much a consultancy agency that we work alongside people to help them affect their own change.

So one of the things that we do to start with is we go directly to the leaders in an organisation to tell them what our offer is and also to hear from them what it is that they feel that they need help with and then we start to gather evidence about where are the areas most needed for improvement based on what the data tells us. Because what we've found in PACE is that people have got lots of opinions and lots of anecdotes about what's working and what's not working but it's not always supported by the data. And I'll give you just a very quick example of that was one local authority - a health and social care partnership now, it wasn't at the time - was really convinced that actually most of the drift and delay for their looked after children sat with the court. We went and we looked at the data for the last 20 children who had been through a court process to achieve legal orders for permanence and actually the majority of those children had achieved their orders as quickly as the court could possibly have issued them within the legislation.

So that helped them to think about all right okay so the anecdote isn't necessarily supported by the data, so let's look at ourselves and look at our own systems and see if some of that is maybe responsible for the drift and delay and that's what they found and the data is very hard to argue with really, you know, (it's easy to and) we get we tend to focus on the difficult stuff as well. Whereas, actually, often when we get data we're very able to help people see what they're doing really well and that's as important.

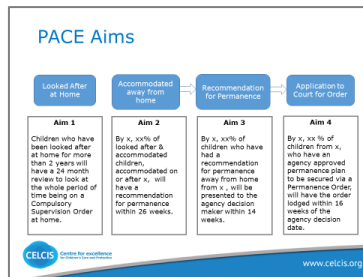
So getting that leadership buy-in, to enable us to go in to be able to do all of that work, because that you know that's a very vulnerable place for organisations to be because they're scrutinising the things that are very close to their hearts, that they doing day in and day out and that's - you know - real credit to agencies, they've been prepared to be vulnerable in that way.

PACE has always aspired to be a multi-agency programme, because the system that deals with looked after children in Scotland is fiendishly complicated, has numerous agencies numerous individuals and sometimes what we do can feel very abstract when we're working with their looked after children. Some of the people that have to make decisions for our looked after children maybe don't even see them. So part of the process as well is about trying to reduce the abstraction in the system, so that people actually appreciate that these are individual real people whose lives are impacted by the decisions that are being made. So trying to get multi-agency partners on board as well has been very important, and that's not always been easy, because not everybody is where we are in terms of the narrative around the importance of everybody working hard to try and improve our outcomes for our looked after children.



(KD) Can you say even more about who these multi-agency partners are?

(CW) Yeah so health, education, CHS, SCRA. It could be drug and alcohol services for adults, it could be adult community care for instance because, you know, we can't improve things for our looked after children without working with the adults that are responsible for caring for them. So there's a huge amount of partnerships there; the lead agencies tend to be social work because that's, you know, they're the lead agency in their responsibility but the days of us talking about social work assessments and so on they should be gone really because these should be multi-agency partnerships that are surrounding children to try and reduce vulnerability and increase well-being.



(KD) You talked a wee bit earlier about PACE in itself being a framework and we're aware that there are four PACE aims. Can you talk us through them a wee bit?

(CW) Yeah, so again, when we started we very much focused on children who are looked after away from home, but as we've grown and developed and understand better the systems that we work in we understand that - it's very difficult to draw a line because the children who are at home at the moment, living on the edges of care or who are considered to be vulnerable - some of those children are the looked after children of tomorrow, they are looked after children of tomorrow at home and they are looked after children who become looked after and accommodated. So we can't deal with children as isolated groups but certainly for the purpose of our programme we are focusing on looked after children. So we start at the point a child becomes looked after at home right up until the point that, for those children who require it, it's a legal order and we broke that down into four sort of chunks that were based on big milestones of decision making for children.

(CW) So the first group of children that we aspire to improve outcomes for are looked after children at home.

(KD) And that's Aim One?

(CW) Yes, that's Aim One, and that aim specifically draws from the, again, the [SCRA research](#) - the SCRA website is a brilliant place to go for research about looked after children - their research that said that after two years the improvement in wellbeing indicators for looked after children tends to start dropping off. So and, again, I suppose there's a question that needs to be asked - that if children have been looked after at home for more than two years and they continue to be so because of concerns about their wellbeing we need to go back and ask is the care plan still appropriate for that child.

So Aim One has been that the PACE areas have started looking at all of their children who are looked after at home for more than two years, to find out, one, whether or not that is still the right thing for them whether they should still be on an order at all, and what we found is, actually, when those plans have been scrutinised, many children they didn't need to continue to be on their order and for some children are they safe enough?

Aim Two then: we started looking at children who were looked after away from home and how long it was taking for us to make recommendations for either them going back home or permanently being looked after away from home. And again that's been based on the research and Scottish Government guidance, that really after six months we should be in a position because we've got really good robust support and parental capacity assessments that says whether or not children can go home and if they're unable to that we start making plans for them being looked after permanently away from home.

Aim 3 is for children that aren't able to return home: that what we say is - and based again on the research evidence and the national guidance - that from a decision for permanence away from home being made, that we shouldn't be taking more than 14 weeks for a recommendation and approval by the agency decision maker to be made about that child's permanent plan.

Then Aim Four is that from that agency decision maker - the agency decision maker agreeing the plan - that we shouldn't be taking more than 16 weeks for the application to be lodged in court. And the reason we don't take that right up until the end of the process of an application actually being granted is because it's tended to fall outwith the influence of the programme, to be able to have that influence over sheriffs. But that we very much hope to influence the legal departments in local authorities to be able to understand that, and be driven to understand that, taking too long to lodge applications for permanence orders with authority to adopt or permanence orders - and they tend to take longer because there's no legislative timescales - that really if it's taking longer than six weeks and that's having a detrimental impact on the long-term outcomes for children because we're taking too long to make decisions.

(KD) So each PACE area is looking, to some extent, on these four PACE aims, is that the ideal we would want them to be doing?

(CW) Yeah and I think when we first started we didn't, we weren't prescriptive about what the aim should be but what we learned from the people that were working with us was that actually they really appreciated the direction of the aims. Now within those aims, how long it may take one local authority or multi-agency partnership might be different to another but we base that on the data about how well they're doing currently because we don't want to set them up to fail by saying you need to achieve a specific time scale within a certain time but actually it's not achievable. So sometimes, incrementally, we have to work towards the ideal time scales for our looked after children.

PACE in a nutshell

- Base line data comparison with PACE Aims
- Using the Model for Improvement
- Test change ideas

PACE has engaged with 27 of 32 local authorities in Scotland

Model for Improvement
What are we trying to accomplish?
How will we know that a change is an improvement?
What changes are we going to test?
What will result in improvement?

Act Plan Study Do

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(KD) So you're looking at the baseline data first of all, to see how they're comparing within these four aims, and then using the Model for Improvement to understand their system and try and test change ideas?

(CW) Yeah that's exactly it.

(KD) That does sound a lot of work!


(CW) You should know Kirsty!

(KD) And how many local authority areas have PACE been working in across Scotland?

(CW) So of the 32 local authorities, health and social care partnerships in Scotland we've engaged with 27 of them. Now not all of those have been ... we've had the same sort of delivery but all of them have been engaged in thinking about how we improve outcomes for our looked after children.

Challenges

- Complex system
- Understanding and clarity
- Financial restraint
- Shift in thinking around working with children and families
- Length of time for decision making
- Support at the point of care
- Early intervention

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(KD) What are the challenges in doing this work?

(CW) Well as I said earlier, the system that people are trying to work within to deliver services to individual people are really complex and complicated and not everybody understands everybody else's world. Even within our own sphere of responsibility, we're not always clear about the legislation, about the impact of what we do, the lines of responsibility and so trying to navigate all of that for people is very complicated. We are living in a time of extreme financial constraint; where we used to be able to say if we just were a bit more efficient, did things a bit more differently then we've got enough resource and it'll all be okay. I think those times have gone, sometimes we just don't have enough resource and there's no getting away from that. I think that there's been a massive shift in the way we think, as well, about how we work with families and children, that we are trying to be much more engaged and listen to what children and families want, rather than delivering fairly paternal services that tell people what they're getting - and I think that's a big shift for the sector generally but one that we absolutely have to make.

(KD) Have you found that there are any different challenges in different areas that you're working in?

(CW) There are always different challenges and context is everything - and all improvement is local - but there are there are massive overarching themes that we cannot avoid. Most multi-agency partnerships are taking too long to make permanent recommendations for children, the support that families get at the point of vulnerability when children are on the edges of care isn't always as robust as we would like it to be, but there's huge efforts across Scotland - some brilliant pockets of work - that are really trying to address that. We don't do things early enough. We tend to try and fix things once the horse has bolted, so trying to across Scotland pushing resource, pushing attention upstream to supporting families and children before there becomes a crisis and before their well-being is very negatively impacted, to the point they have to become looked after as well is something that we are all trying to work towards as we go forward because our current system is not sustainable really.

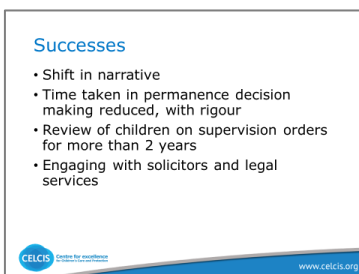


(KD) In the PACE work, how do you and the team - when you're out delivering PACE - how do you try and mitigate against those challenges?

(CW) I think it's, you've got to start with the conversation and you've got to start with the data you've got to start with understanding what drives people, you have to listen, you have to engage, you have to empower people to be able to make small changes that are very impactful, and you have to build the relationships because without all the relationships - and without people feeling safe - then you're not able to affect the change that you want to see because

(KD) It's difficult isn't it you need to feel empowered and safe to do that.

(CW) It is, and more than, you know, many areas of work child care is a heavily regulated process and [Eileen Munro](#) wrote about it a number of years ago - I'm not saying anything new - that, you know, we have to try and get away from it being paperwork and reports and focusing on systems and structure - and be able to get back to build relationships with children and families to drive and improve what we're trying to help people to achieve. That can be a culture change because the pendulum changes, swings all the time doesn't it, and but that's where we need to get back to.



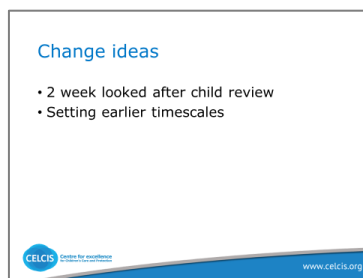
(KD) So we've talked a little bit there about some of the challenges and some of the difficult things that we have to get our head around in PACE. But what have been some of the big successes that you've found and some of the benefits that local authority areas have found from engaging with PACE?

(CW) I think some of it's not all that easy to measure or to articulate. For me, what I come back to always is that I have seen the narrative around what permanence is for children and who permanence children are - I'm trying to do quote marks but you can't do that on audio - we've, you know, I've seen the narrative shift in Scotland and that there be as much weight put on making good decisions and moving along the lives of looked after children as the tradition has been on child protection and children who are on the edge of care.

So I think that has happened, although it can be quite difficult to measure, but there is stuff we can measure otherwise we would be failing doing a quality improvement programme. And we know in a number of local authorities the time it makes for

them to make permanent recommendations - including a permanent return home for children has reduced exponentially - but it's not just about the numbers because you reduce the time it takes without improving the quality of what you do because those children are still subject to all the same rigor of decision making - through either internal process or through Children's Hearing or the court - but they've managed to reduce the time it takes so those children are getting security and messages about their security much more quickly. Most of the PACE areas we've engaged in have now reviewed all of their children who've been on supervision orders for more than two years and we've done great work in engaging solicitors in a way that we haven't before to understand the necessity to make quicker decisions and work more closely with partnerships to get good reports that can be lodged in court and that can be successful. So I think those are some of the highlights for me.

(KD) You talked a wee bit earlier about one of the benefits of PACE, and in general using a Quality Improvement methodology, is that it can empower frontline workers who are actually doing the job day in day out and know where the difficulties are. Can you talk a little bit specifically about some of the key change ideas that have been tested and found to be really successful, and I know there's a lot that worked - some areas more than others - but what for you would be some of the key ones that you would remember?



(CW) So I think I think the one that sticks out for me - none of these things are just one thing that happens - they're complex, you know, but as an example: for children who become looked after, holding a looked after review within two weeks of them becoming looked after and accommodated has really revolutionised the timescales it takes to get to permanent recommendations. And the reason it's done that is because in holding a review at two weeks we've had to be much clearer about the expectation of what we discussed at that two weeks and that we've had to be much more focused. But also what families and children were telling us was that once they become looked after and accommodated, there may be a 72-hour planning meeting which was maybe attended maybe held, maybe not, but then they were waiting six weeks before there was any formal discussion about what the ongoing plan was. Now workers told us that well we wait until that point to start any formal work with the family, foster carers were telling us well we don't really know what happens during that time we're not clear, parents were saying we're not clear about the plan either - so holding that review at two weeks when everybody's had time for the dust to settle of the trauma of a child being removed from the care of its parents - even though it's the right thing - that it's been really helpful to be clear about the plan but also set down dates for future review of the child's circumstances up to the point where there is an expectation that the decision will be made. So everybody goes away from that being much clearer.

(KD) So setting the time scales at an earlier stage?

(CW) Setting time scales, again pushing things up line and being clearer and earlier stage.

(KD) In general in PACE how do you celebrate and share the successes?

(CW) So we meet regularly as teams - we originally called those champions groups in each local area, but what people call them has changed over time. So we have multi-agency groups of the core people who are driving the improvements. We meet - the consultants go out and we'll, you know, meet people individually as well to help and support them to drive the programme forward. We had national events; for a number of years we held the Gathering PACE event, which was always really well received and well attended, and was just a really good opportunity for people to come and share what they're doing. We hook people up, we invite people to introduce themselves to other people in other areas, we've got online publications, we've got online blogs, and video - of people talking about the impact that PACE has had for them in the work that they've done and how they've found it - and I think the team are great ambassadors for the programme really - they at every opportunity talk about what we do what we can offer and how it can be impactful and share the learning.

Thinking about PACE and QI?

- Read:
 - John P. Kotter: Leading Change
 - Institute of Healthcare Improvement
 - NHS Education for Scotland
- Speak to people – understand your system
- Look at data to evidence

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The slide also features a small image of the book cover for 'Leading Change' by John P. Kotter, which shows a person climbing a mountain.

(KD) Well following on from that, what would you say to somebody who's maybe listening to this and thinking about using the PACE model?

(CW) So I would say go away and read. I would say read John Kotter's book about leading change, which has got eight steps, it's an eight-step framework for leading improvement which is our bible in the team. And I would also go online and have a look at some of the materials on the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](http://www.institute-for-healthcare-improvement.org) website as well, which is an organization that uses Quality Improvement, and then there's the [NES](http://www.nes.nhs.uk) website they have got a ton of resource. The CELCIS website has got a lot of resource. But I suppose the first thing I would do is speak to people as well, understand how your system is working because before you make any changes you need to understand what it is that we're doing and don't just take people's word for it either, go to the data look at what the data is telling you to support what people are saying.

What have you learned from PACE?

- Everyone wants the best for children and families

What we need:

- Frameworks to drive improvement
- To make change – do something radical
- Following the process with fidelity

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(KD) So with that in mind, thinking about your experience of PACE over the last few years what are the key things that you've learned from delivering PACE? Big question.

(CW) It is a big question. I've found across Scotland nobody comes to work not wanting to improve what they, do everybody wants the best thing for the children and families that they work on behalf of and with. What we need though are frameworks by which, as groups of people, we can drive improvement, because you can be the best social worker, the best health visitor, the best teacher in the world but if the system is preventing you to do some of the core things you need to do to drive improvement for the people you work with then you might make a bit of change to one or two people but it won't be embedded it won't be consistent and as soon as you go things will fall back because systems are very resistant to change. Systems give you what you get, they want you to have what you designed it to give you. So to change the system; you have to do something more radical and start disrupting what we're doing, but we need to do that in a way that takes people with us. So being very clear, being specific about what we want to achieve, and having some trust in the process - having trust that if we follow the process with a degree of fidelity then we will achieve the improvement we want to see.

- Understand why we do what we do
- People engage when they understand why
- Core values

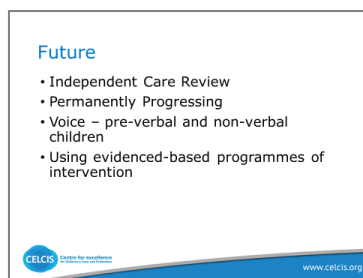
- Leaders have to want what has been offered and release control

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(KD) I'm building on that a wee bit then Carol, and you've maybe touched on already, but what would you say the key things you've learned from working to change complex systems in general, from PACE, that you would apply to this work outside of PACE? That's probably an even bigger question actually!

(CW) I think you we have to understand why we do what we do. It's not enough to say how we do it or what we do; people engage when they understand why we do what we do, what are our core values and from our core values should drive the what we do and how we do it. So for me, a core value is - I want looked after children to have the very best experience that they can have and that they are entitled to be cared for by people who will help them to go on to live happy productive and effective lives, whatever that means for them. That's a core value I think that anybody at CELGIS would agree with.

So for me the leaders in an organisation have got to want what we've offered and they've got to be prepared to release some of the control and authority around some of that and let people on the front line do stuff. I think that's a lesson for all of us. I think any leader or manager sometimes it can be a bit difficult to loosen the reins but unless we disseminate and delegate some of their authority - obviously there's core things we need to do, that we're obliged to do as leaders or managers in an organisation - but people delivering services on the front line and children and families - they know what they want, they know what they need and leaders have to allow them to flourish and do some of that. And it's only in doing that that do we build sustainable change that will continue long after we've gone moved on to the next thing or retired.



(KD) In your opinion Carol what are the big things we need to be thinking about in the future?

(CW) Well, I think it's a very interesting time; we've got the findings of the [Independent Care Review](#), the recommendations of the Independent Care Review which we absolutely need to act on. You know, I don't think it's enough for the people who have invested so much time and effort and energy and made themselves so vulnerable in that process just that we've heard it, we need to be seen to be taking action to implement the recommendations of the Care Review.

There's been a number of very interesting pieces of research in the last year or two; the best for me is Helen Whincup along with Nina Biehal's research, [Permanently Progressing](#), which is again seminal in helping us to articulate a lot of the things that we already know about the impact on the way we make decisions and how children young people and their families experience that. We have to be mindful that the majority of looked after children, whilst over the age of five, there is a significant portion of children - I think last time we looked at 45% of looked after children - are under the age of five so when we're focusing on voice, how do we help children that are either pre-verbal, or non-verbal through disability, articulate their stories and their wants and needs and then have influence in the way that they are helped by the system. So I think all of those things are things that we need to attend to over the next 12 months, again it's fiendishly complicated, I keep coming back to that notion, but they're all things that we need to be thinking about. Being much better at using evidence-based programmes of intervention as well, so the one that springs to mind is- [concurrency planning](#) for children under the age of five - anybody that knows me knows I couldn't do this podcast without getting concurrency planning in there as a mention - because concurrency planning is, you know, it's been well researched as something that is highly effective in providing long-term stability for very young, very vulnerable children and improving outcomes for the parents who can no longer care for them. It ticks so many boxes so I would like to see evidence based programmes, like concurrency planning, routinely in place across Scotland.

(KD) And I'm right in saying that I think I'm right in saying that there's resources on concurrency planning on the [CELCIS website](#)?

(CW) There are yeah.

(KD) Okay, and one final question for you Carol, if you had a magic wand what one thing would you do to improve the system for the benefit of babies, children and young people?

(CW) Oh well if I had a magic wand, I suppose we wouldn't need a system would we because the social inequalities that exist in society wouldn't exist and that people would all be incredibly well equipped to do everything they need to bring up their own children in their own care and for them all to have you know brilliant outcomes. But I know that that is magic one stuff - and I say that as a very imperfect parent myself. So I suppose we wouldn't be needed that would if I had a magic wand that would be the one thing that I would change.

Other resources:

CELCIS Knowledge Bank:

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/>

Independent Care Review and The Promise:

<https://www.carereview.scot/>

Robert Lloyd [The Model for Improvement](#)

Eileen Munro – [Munro Review](#)

Adriano Pianesi – [Adaptive Leadership in 4 minutes of less](#)

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration [Resources and research](#)

Permanently Progressing:

<https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/faculties/social-sciences/our-research/research-areas/centre-for-child-wellbeing-and-protection/research/permanently-progressing/>

CELCIS Knowledge Bank:

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/>

Institute for Healthcare Improvement:

<http://www.ihl.org/>

NHS Education for Scotland:

<https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/>

The Case for Concurrency Planning – Carol Wassell:

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/case-concurrency-planning/>

Concurrency: Planning for all outcomes – Carol Wassell:

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/blog/2016/11/concurrency-planning-all-outcomes/>