

Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) in Dumfries and Galloway

All agencies across Dumfries and Galloway are committed to improving the experiences of children who require care and protection. Working in partnership with CELCIS, the Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme has been driving system improvements since 2016. We have scaled those good practice, as well as identifying new tests of change which have the greatest leverage in the system. We have also built considerable quality improvement capacity across the Dumfries and Galloway workforce with staff undertaking a range of NHS and Scottish Government improvement courses. Ongoing challenges include mining the data to evidence our progress against our aims and scaling up tests of change that require multiagency support.

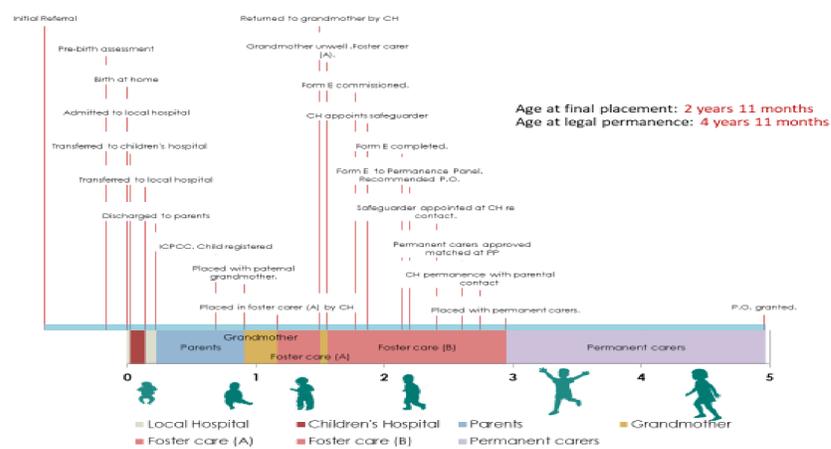
New Aims

Across Dumfries and Galloway, we identified the need for new aims which were in line with the national guidance, research and legal obligations of services. We also wanted to make sure that our aims were similar to other local authority areas, and the following were finalised in September 2018:

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| <p>Aim 1: From 1st October 2018, all children looked after at home for more than 2 years will undergo a peer review that will be reported to the Locality Managers, Senior Social Workers and Senior Manager Children and Families SW.</p> | <p>Aim 2: By 31st August 2019, 75% of children who are looked after & accommodated on or after 31st August 2018 will have a recommendation for permanence within 30 weeks of becoming Accommodated.</p> | <p>Aim 3: By 31st August 2019, 75% of children who have had a recommendation for permanence away from home on or after the 31st August 2018 will be presented to the Permanence Panel within 12 weeks of the looked after child meeting that recommended permanence</p> | <p>Aim 4: By 31st August 2019, 60% of children who the ADM has approved a plan to lodge a Permanence Order on or after 31st August 2018 will have the order lodged within 16 weeks of ADM sign off.</p> |
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Using Timelines

Timelines are a visual representation of a child's journey. Following successful testing using PDSA and improvement methodology, we adapted and later, adopted this as practice across Dumfries and Galloway. A CELCIS Data Analyst trained administrative and social work staff in how to build timelines. These are used to support assessments when making recommendations to Children's Hearings. Feedback has been extensively positive; detailing how it keeps the child and their lived experience at the centre of decision-making, tells a story succinctly on one sheet of paper, illustrates gaps in a child's journey and enables the whole decision making system of parents, carers, social workers and panel members to empathise more with a child's experience – supporting better decisions.



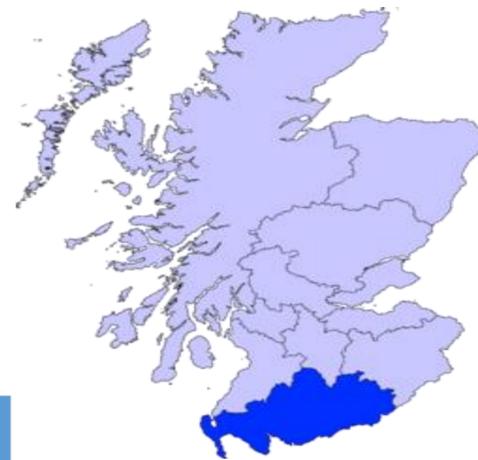
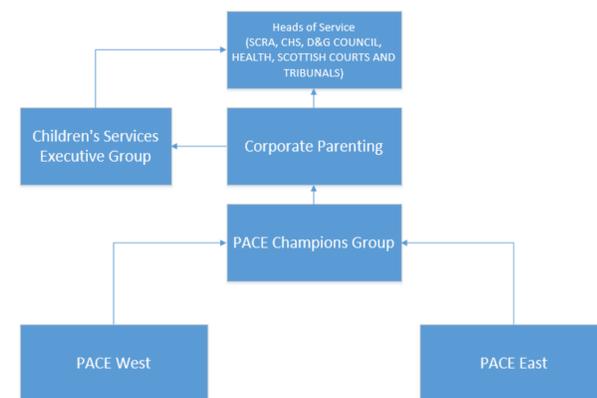
The 'Child-Centred Checklist' for CHS Chairs

Local data supported national research in raising concerns about reaching decisions at children's hearings, and the extent to which children's voices were central to this process. Children's Hearing Feedback Forms sought feedback from professionals at hearings, and were collated and thematically scrutinised. It showed that parents weren't receiving adequate information, that parents and solicitors sometimes acted in adversarial ways and that social workers felt undermined. A Panel Chair produced a Child-Centred Checklist which distilled the Children's Hearing regulations into an easy to follow guide. This provides a clear and methodical format for managing even the most complex and challenging Hearings. This was taken forward as a test of change which demonstrated the need for guidance notes. The checklist achieves the following:

- Places the child/young person at the centre of the hearing
- 'Share the Chair' - give children/young people the opportunity to contribute to the structure of the hearing, identifying their own priorities and flipping the power divide between panel, professionals, children and their families
- Centre the process on the child/young person's voice – create a space where their views can heard and listened to
- Provide a consistent approach to the chairing of hearings

After receiving extensively positive feedback from all stakeholders and making amendments, an implementation plan has been agreed to scale this up across Dumfries and Galloway by early December 2018, and there is interest from across Scotland (including Highland, Glasgow and East Renfrewshire). A plan is also in place to build an 'Infant-Centred Checklist' to ensure that the process centres on the experiences of babies in hearings.

PACE Governance



Gathering PACE Event in D&G: March 2018

Following on from last year's Gathering PACE Event, we decided to have a 'Gathering PACE in Dumfries & Galloway' Event. The purpose of this was to reach out to frontline practitioners, starting with Children and Families Social Work (with a 2019 multiagency event planned).

Event aims:

- Time to reflect as practitioners
- Increase awareness of PACE
- Allow practitioners to consider how PACE can make a difference
- Identify and support next steps with PACE
- Identify Champions in Children and Families team

Feedback:

- Overwhelmingly positive
- Understanding of 'Better Hearings'
- Challenge and support around throughcare and aftercare practice
- An opportunity to scale up a test of change which had been taken forward prior to the event (e.g. new parenting assessments)

Parenting Assessments

This year, we developed a new parenting assessment which is being rolled out across the region. We had evidence which demonstrated a lack of clear assessment regarding parenting capacity and the quality of evidence that supports a recommendation. In addition, recommendations have been made ruling out rehabilitation; but without the parallel consideration of potential kinship carers. By ensuring that the assessment is robust and undertaken with all permanence options in mind within a twelve week timeframe, unnecessary delay in assessment has been reduced by using this new assessment.

The assessment itself changes the focus to permanence planning, using permanence language within it. The assessment was also designed with the aim that it will replace a Form E document to streamline processes and reduce the time spent by social work staff completing different assessments for different purposes. Therefore, the Form E document was used as an aid to create this. We now use Permanence Order applications to present to Panel rather than Form Es.

Next Steps...

- More tests of change to be agreed across all four aims
- New driver diagrams completed for all four aims
- Tests of change generated involving health colleagues
- Evidence improvement with data
- Fully scale up tests of change which have worked in local context
- Have a date agreed for post PACE self-sufficiency – possibly in 2020

