



Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute

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Troubled Families Programme National Evaluation

**Staff survey among Troubled Families Employment
Advisers**

Conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of MHCLG

Contents

1 Introduction	1
Background.....	1
Methodology	1
2 Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role	4
Who are TFEAs?.....	4
TFEA role	7
Working with families on the programme	9
3 Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme	14
Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme.....	14
Impact of support.....	17
4 Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants	21
Support for claimants	21
Additional resources required	27
5 Workforce development	30
Training	30
Support and supervision.....	32
Developing TFEA skills	35
6 Multi-agency working	38
Working with partner services	38
Support from partners	39
Barriers to effective partnership working.....	40
7 Conclusions	43

1. Introduction

Background

Methodology

1 Introduction

Background

This report presents findings from the third research study among Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEAs), conducted on behalf of the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). TFEAs provide advice to help families to move towards employment.

The Troubled Families Programme (2015-2020) aims to support up to 400,000 complex families with multiple high-cost problems by 2020. It is designed to help families with severe and persistent problems make significant and sustained progress towards their goals. Key features include promoting a whole family, early help approach across partner agencies including the police, Jobcentre Plus, housing, schools, voluntary sector and health.

This research is one element of the national evaluation, alongside a longitudinal quantitative family survey, qualitative case studies and monitoring via data collected as part of the National Impact Study and Family Progress Data.

The evaluation aims to explore the level of service transformation driven by the programme as well as the impact of whole family working approach on outcomes for families themselves, and the cost benefits that this has for the taxpayer.

Methodology

Data was gathered from TFEAs through an online survey. DWP provided valid email addresses for 304 TFEAs, who were sent an email with a direct link to the survey. In total, responses were received from 216 TFEAs and the overall response rate to the survey was 71%, this is higher than both previous waves. TFEAs from 129 of the 152 local authorities (85%) took part and the majority of these local authorities (85%) also took part in 2016. Fieldwork was conducted between 23 October 2017 and 13 December 2017.

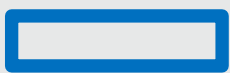
Separate reports present findings for similar surveys of Troubled Families Co-ordinators (TFCs) and Troubled Families keyworkers or front-line practitioners. These staff surveys are designed to run annually over the five years of the evaluation; this is the third in the series.

The questionnaire was updated between waves to reflect changes in the delivery of the programme. However, many questions are consistent allowing for comparison over time. The majority of questions are asked of all TFEAs with the exception of those who reported they offered more than two types of help and support to Troubled Families claimants, they were then asked to confirm which were most effective in terms of offering positive outcomes for these claimants.

The following table outlines the fieldwork dates and sample sizes for each wave of research. As a guide, when looking at how a result varies, differences should be between ± 3 to 4 percentage points to be sure they represent statistically significant (or 'real') differences and are not due to chance (based on 95% confidence intervals).

Wave 1	26 th October-30 th November 2015	194 TFEAs	60%
Wave 2	31 st October-9 th December 2016	202 TFEAs	62%
Wave 3	23 rd October-13 th December 2017	216 TFEAs	71%

Where a result is significantly greater than in previous years this is highlighted by the use of a blue box, where it is lower it is highlighted by the use of a yellow box.



Result has significantly increased since the previous wave.



Result has significantly decreased since the previous wave.

'N/A' is used to signify that a year-on-year comparison is unavailable due to the survey question not being asked in a comparable format, or at all.

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding or multiple responses. To ensure the pie and bar charts are easy to read, where an answer is three per cent or lower the figure is not shown.

2. Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role

Who are TFEAs?

TFEA role

Working with families on the programme

2 Troubled Families Employment Advisers' role

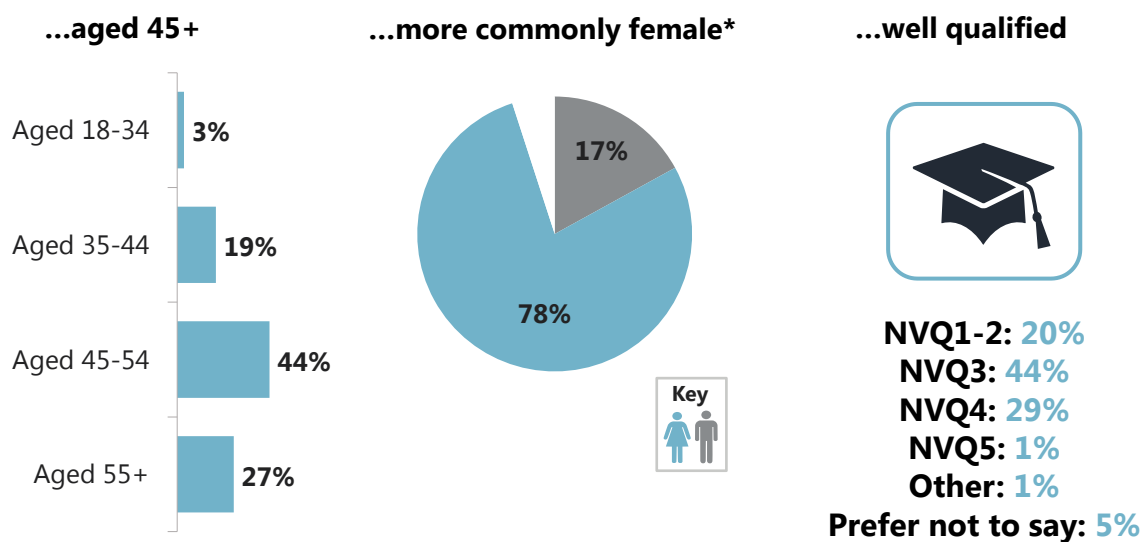
The majority of TFEAs are female, aged 45 or over and well qualified.

Who are TFEAs?

To place the findings in context, in this section we outline the profile of TFEAs who took part in the 2017 survey in terms of their age, gender, qualifications, role and the nature of the agency they work in.

The majority of TFEAs who responded to the survey are female (78%) and aged 45 or over (71%). Three in ten (30%) say that their highest qualification is at least a bachelor degree or equivalent and just over four in ten (44%) say A level or equivalent, as shown in the chart below.

Troubled Families Employment Advisers tend to be...



TFEAs most commonly represent DWP or Jobcentre Plus, and half have been working there for 21 years or more.

Almost all (99%) TFEAs responding to the survey are employed by DWP/ Jobcentre Plus. When asked what type of organisation they represent, three-quarters (75%) describe themselves as representing DWP/ Jobcentre Plus, 17% specify a Troubled Families team, and seven per cent say they work within a children, young people and families team.

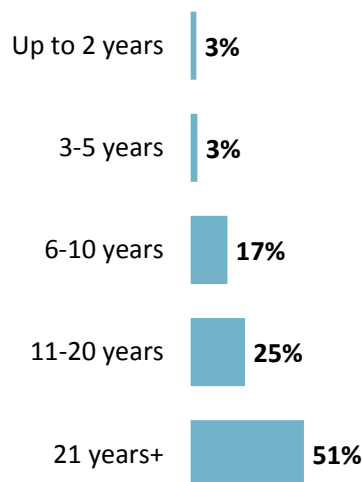
Most of the TFEAs participating in the study are highly experienced in their role. Half (51%) have been working within DWP/ Jobcentre Plus for more than 21 years. A quarter (25%) have between 11 and 20 years' experience and a further 17% more than five years. Just six per cent of TFEAs are relatively new to working within DWP/ Jobcentre Plus, with five years or less experience.

Troubled Families Employment Advisors tend to be...

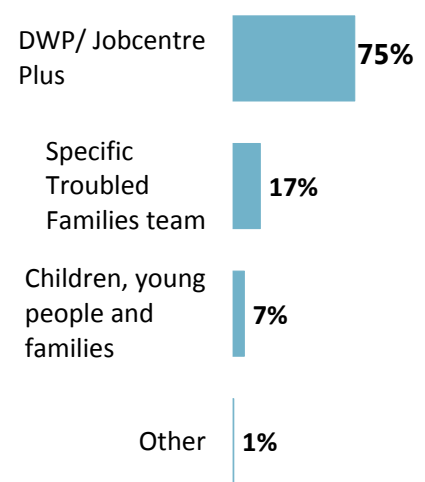
...employed by DWP/ Jobcentre Plus

99% are employed by DWP / Jobcentre Plus.

...experienced employees within DWP / Jobcentre Plus



...representing DWP/ Jobcentre Plus

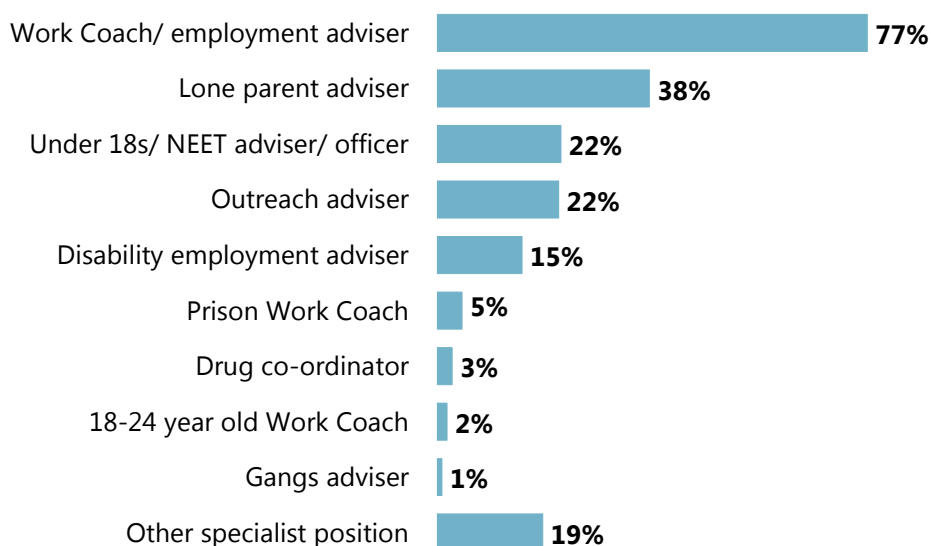


Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QA4, W2QA7, QA5)

Most TFEAs have relevant experience, having previously been a Work Coach or employment adviser.

Prior to their current role as a TFEA, most (77%) say they have been employed as a Work Coach/ employment adviser in the past. Two in five (38%) have previously been a lone parent adviser and one in five (22%) either an under 18s/ NEET adviser or an outreach adviser. Other positions held include disability employment adviser, prison Work Coach, drug co-ordinator and 18-24 year olds Work Coach, as shown in the chart below.

Prior to your current role in DWP/JCP, did you hold any of the following positions?



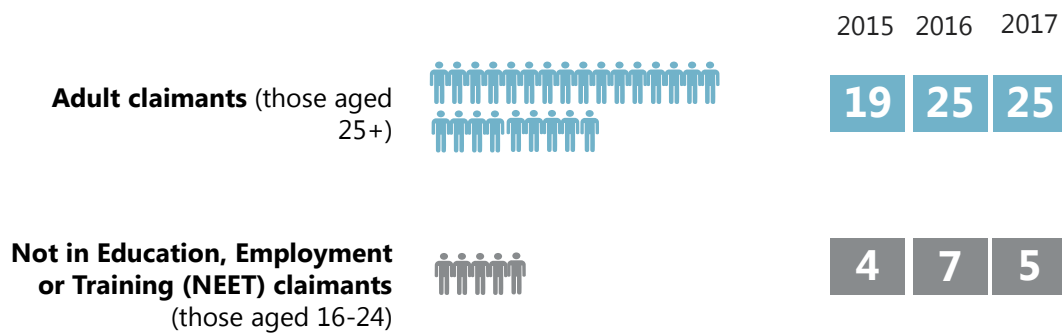
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QA10)

On average, TFEAs are working with 25 adult claimants and five NEET claimants at a time.

TFEA role

On average, TFEAs are actively working with 25 adult claimants (those aged 25+) and five NEET claimants (those aged 16-24), which is consistent with caseloads in 2016.

How many claimants are you currently working with?



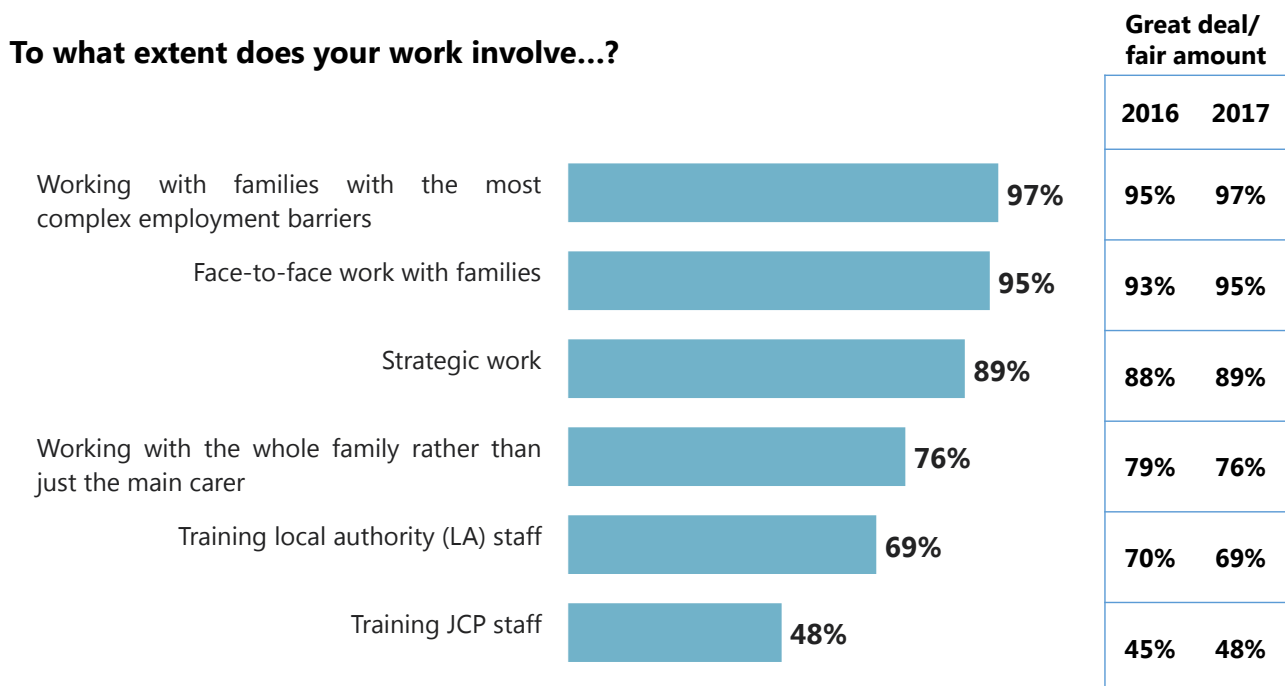
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFEA1)

The TFEA role is varied, involving direct work with families, strategic work and training.

Nearly all TFEAs report working with families with the most complex employment barriers and working face-to-face with families (97% and 95%, respectively). Three quarters (76%) say their role involves spending at least a fair amount of time working with the whole family rather than just the main carer.

Looking at strategic support, nine in ten (89%) say at least a fair amount of their work is strategic, including making links to other employment programmes (such as Work Choice, City Deals, Local Enterprise Partnership activities, European Social Fund programmes) and helping claimants to move closer to or into employment. In addition, many TFEAs spend at least a fair amount of time training local authority staff (69%) and half (48%) say that their work involves training Jobcentre Plus staff.

As shown in the chart below, TFEAs were asked to consider the elements of their role in the same way in 2016 and, overall, little has changed since then. However, more TFEAs in 2017 say that *a great deal* of their time (as opposed to a *fair amount*) is focused on working with the whole family rather than just the main carer than was the case in 2016 (mentioned by 41% in 2017, compared with 32% in 2016).



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFEA3)

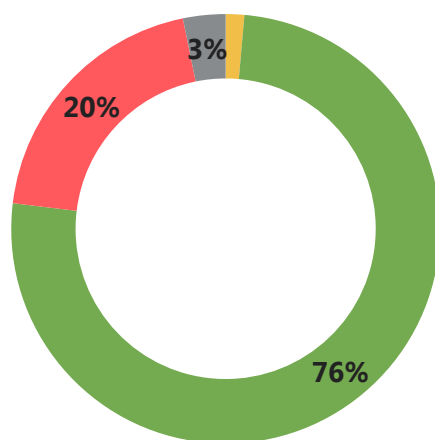
Most TFEAs feel they spend the right amount of time working face-to-face with families, but a fifth say they do not.

Working with families on the programme

Although TFEAs say that their role involves a number of different elements, three quarters (76%) feel they spend the right amount of time working face-to-face with families compared with other tasks. Just one per cent suggest that working directly with families takes up too much of their time. However, one in five (20%) feel they do not spend enough time working with families.

This question was first asked 2016, and findings overall are unchanged.

How do you feel about the proportion of time you spend working face-to-face with families compared with other tasks?



	2016	2017
Too much time	2%	1%
The right amount of time	76%	76%
Not enough time	21%	20%

■ Too much time ■ The right amount of time ■ Not enough time ■ Don't know

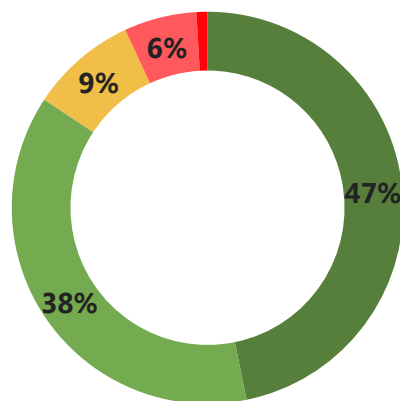
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q1TFEA)

The majority of TFEAs feel that the amount of time they have to work with claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes.

Most TFEAs (85%) agree that the amount of time they have to work with Troubled Families claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes; almost half (47%) say they *strongly* agree, while very few (7%) disagree.

This finding does, however, demonstrate a continued decline in the proportion of TFEAs who feel that they have sufficient time with Troubled Families claimants to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes: 93% agreed they had enough time working with claimants to help them make progress in 2015 compared with 89% in 2016 and 84% in 2017.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that generally the amount of time you have to work with Troubled Families claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes?



	2015	2016	2017
Agree	93%	89%	85%
Disagree	4%	6%	7%

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/ no opinion

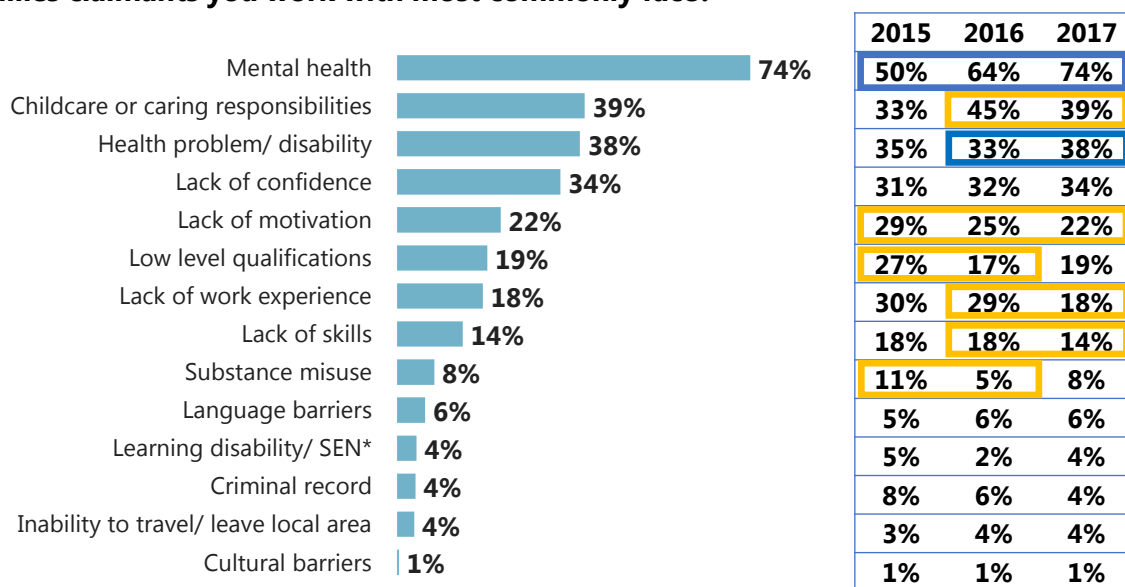
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA4)

Mental health is increasingly highlighted as a barrier to work or training for claimants.

Mental health problems as well as other health problems and disabilities are the most common barriers to work and training experienced by Troubled Families Programme claimants (74% and 38% respectively). Childcare and other caring responsibilities are also identified as a problem (39%).

Mental health is consistently identified as the main barrier to work or training, as illustrated in the chart below, with the proportion of TFEAs citing this year-on-year increasing (50% in 2015, 64% in 2016 and 74% in 2017). In contrast, childcare/ caring responsibilities, a lack of motivation, a lack of work experience or skills are barriers less likely to be highlighted in 2017, compared with 2016.

Which two or three, if any, of the following barriers to work or training do the Troubled Families claimants you work with most commonly face?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFEA5)

*SEN stands for Special Educational Needs

The TFEA role - Summary

Most TFEAs who participated in the research are female (78%) and aged 45 or over (71%). They are also well qualified; three in ten (29%) have a bachelor degree or equivalent and just over four in ten (44%) A levels or equivalent as their highest qualification. Almost all (99%) are employed by DWP/ Jobcentre Plus and half (51%) have been working within the same organisation for more than 20 years. On average, TFEAs are working with 25 adult claimants and five NEET claimants.

Nearly all TFEAs say they are involved in **face-to-face work** with **families who are experiencing the most complex employment barriers**. **Strategic work**, such as making links with other employment programmes, is also a key feature of most TFEAs' role.

A fifth of TFEAs are concerned that they do not spend enough time **working face-to-face with families, compared with other tasks**. However, most do agree that **the amount of time they spend working with Troubled Families claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes**.

Mental health problems are consistently identified by TFEAs as the most common barrier faced by Troubled Families claimants to work or training.

3. Overall views of the Troubled Families Programmes

Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme

Impact of support

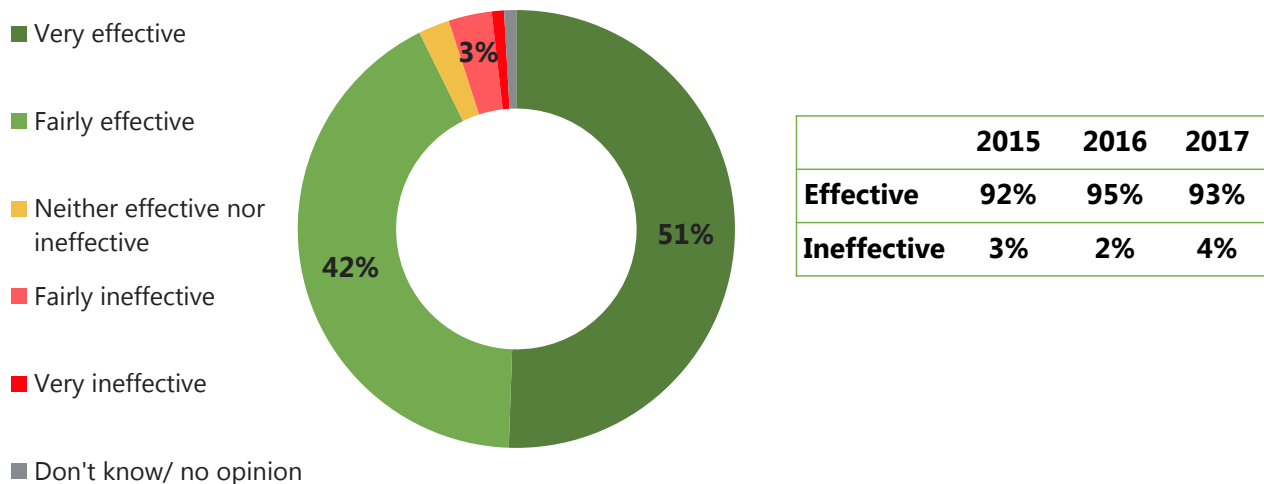
3 Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme

TFEAs feel that the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving long-term positive change in families' circumstances.

Effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme

Nearly all TFEAs (93%) say that the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving long-term positive change in families' circumstances, with half (51%) reporting that the programme is *very* effective. This opinion has remained consistent since 2015, as shown in the chart below.

How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Long term positive change in families circumstances?

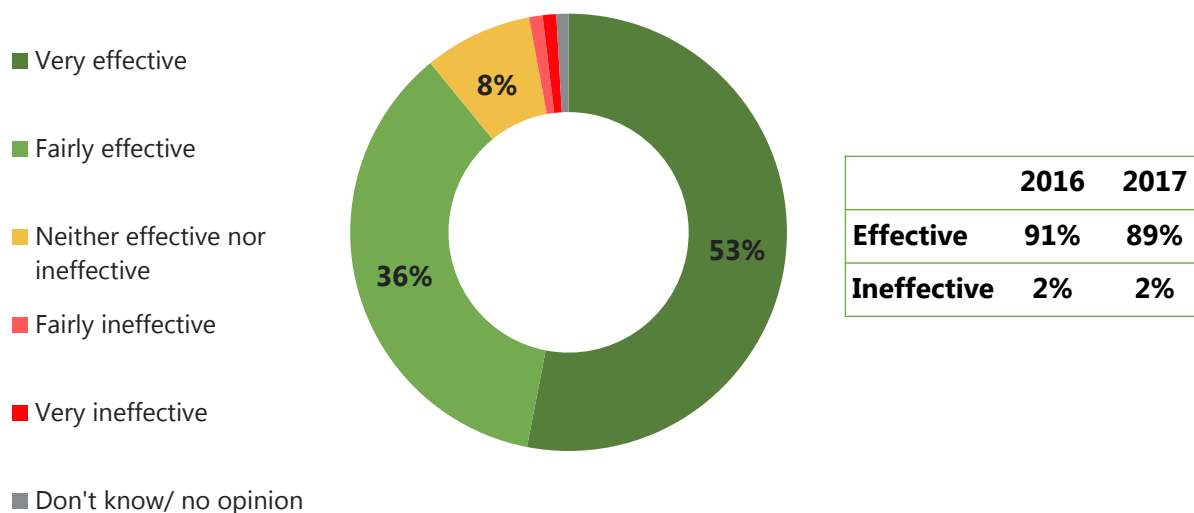


Base: All TFEAs (216): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA24)

TFEAs also feel that the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving whole family working.

Most (89%) TFEAs hold the opinion that the programme is effective at achieving whole family working. Half (53%) say that it is *very* effective in this regard. This is consistent with the view put forward by TFEAs in 2016, when the question was first asked.

How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Whole family working?

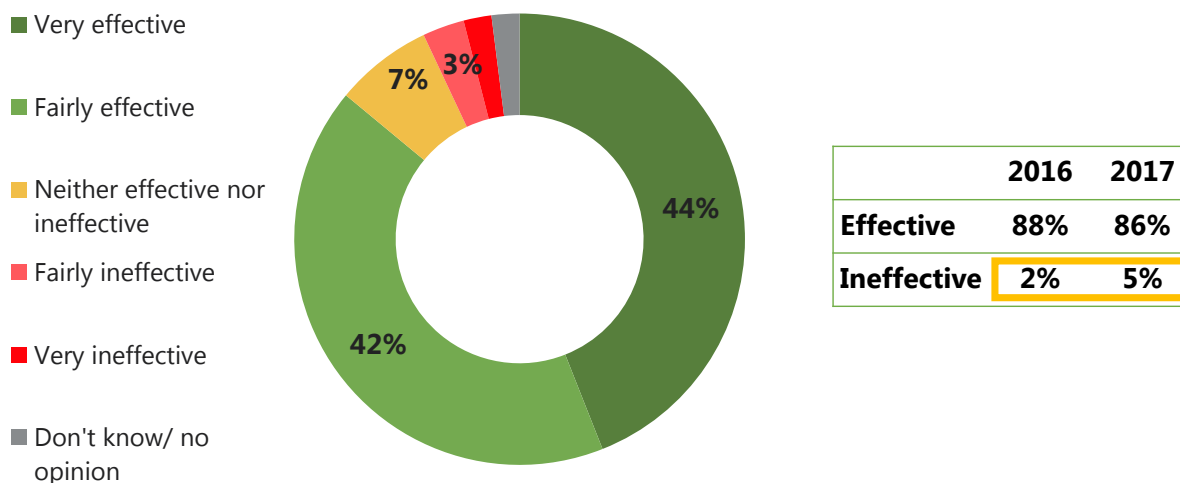


Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA24)

Similarly, TFEAs feel that the Troubled Families Programme is effective at achieving long-term positive change in wider system reform or service transformation in their local authority.

The majority (86%) would also say the programme is effective at achieving long-term positive change in wider system reform or service transformation in their local authority. Approaching half (44%) feel that it is very effective in this regard, but there has been a slight increase in the proportion who say it is ineffective (2% in 2016, compared with 5% in 2017).

How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme is at achieving... Long term positive change in wider system reform/ service transformation in your local authority?



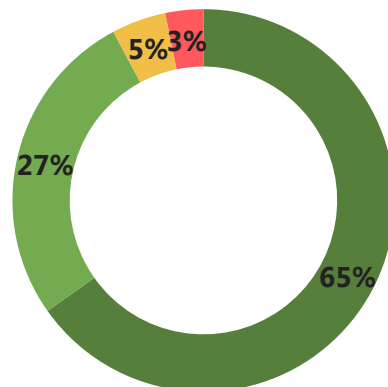
Base: All TFEAs (216): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more (QTFEA24)

TFEAs feel that their work significantly improves whole family outcomes.

Impact of support

Almost all TFEAs (92%) agree that among the Troubled Families Programme claimants they work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole. Two thirds of TFEAs (65%) *strongly* agree with this statement; very few (three per cent) disagree. However, overall agreement this year is lower than in 2016, when 99% of TFEAs agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that among the Troubled Families claimants that you work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole?



	2015	2016	2017
Agree	96%	99%	92%
Disagree	0%	0%	3%

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/ no opinion

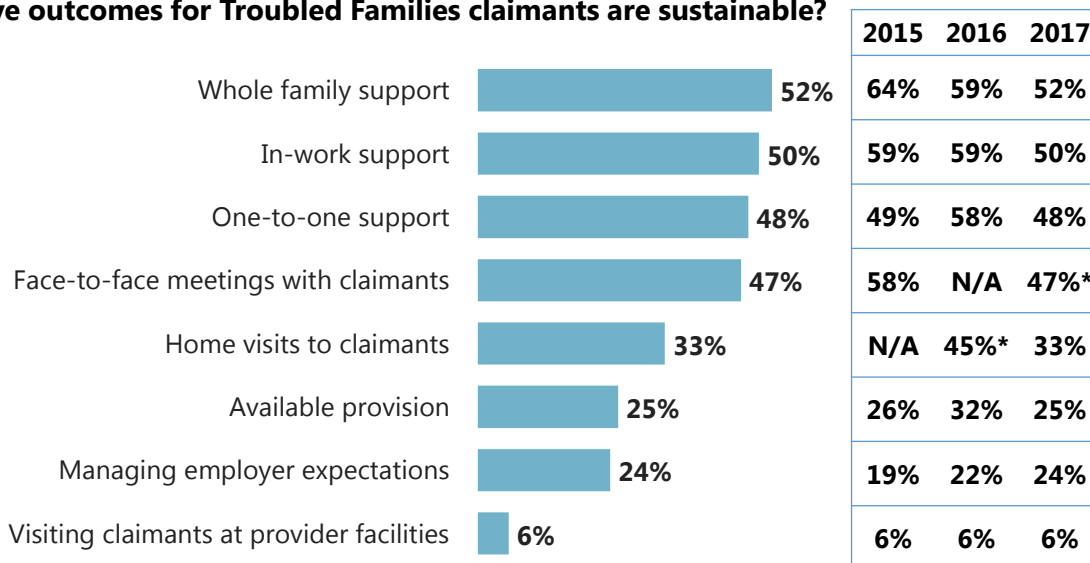
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA13)

TFEAs consider whole family support, in-work support, one-to-one support and face-to-face meetings with claimants to be most important for ensuring sustainable positive outcomes.

TFEAs consider a range of types of support to be important for ensuring that positive outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable. Most notably, whole family support (52%) and in-work support (50%) along with one-to-one support (48%) and face-to-face meetings with claimants (47%).

The chart below, illustrates responses to this question over the three waves of research, but it should be noted that the list is not directly comparable as new codes for types of support have been added each year. For example, in 2017 with more options to choose from fewer TFEAs select any single category, but the general pattern is similar to previous waves.

What are the two or three types of support, if any, are most important to ensure that positive outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable?



Base: All TFEAs (216): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.

*New codes added in subsequent years. (QTFEA14)

Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme - Summary

The Troubled Families Programme is consistently regarded by TFEAs as **effective at achieving long-term positive change** in both **families' circumstances** and **whole family working**. TFEAs also view the programme as effective in terms of achieving long-term positive change in **wider system reform** within their local authority.

Almost all TFEAs agree that among the Troubled Families Programme claimants they work with, **employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole**. In order to ensure that the outcomes for Troubled Families claimants are sustainable, **whole family support** and **in-work support** are most commonly identified as important.

4. Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants

Support for claimants

Training opportunities

Additional resources required

4 Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants

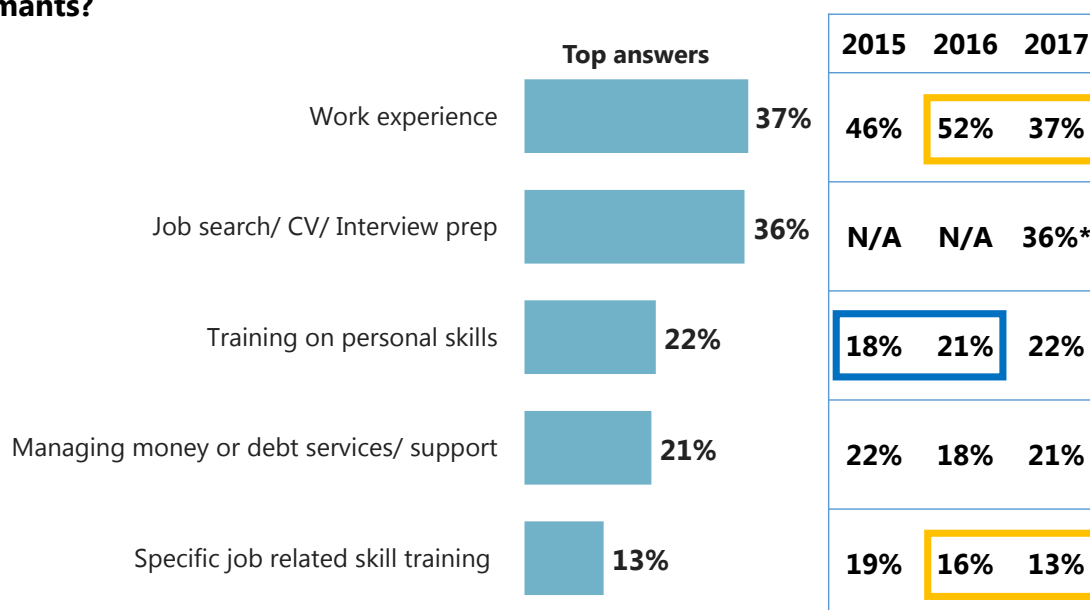
Work experience and job search preparation are seen as most effective in terms of ensuring positive outcomes for claimants.

Support for claimants

A range of help and support is offered to Troubled Families claimants, with work experience (37%) and job search, CV, or interview preparation (36%) most commonly identified as being effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants.

This question has been asked in all three waves of the research but 'job search, CV, or interview preparation' was added for the most recent survey. The overall pattern of response is the same with similar ranking of the types of support presented. However, while fewer select work experience and specific job-related skill training in 2017, this may be a result of the new category being added to the list.

And which two of these are most effective in terms of positive outcomes for these claimants?



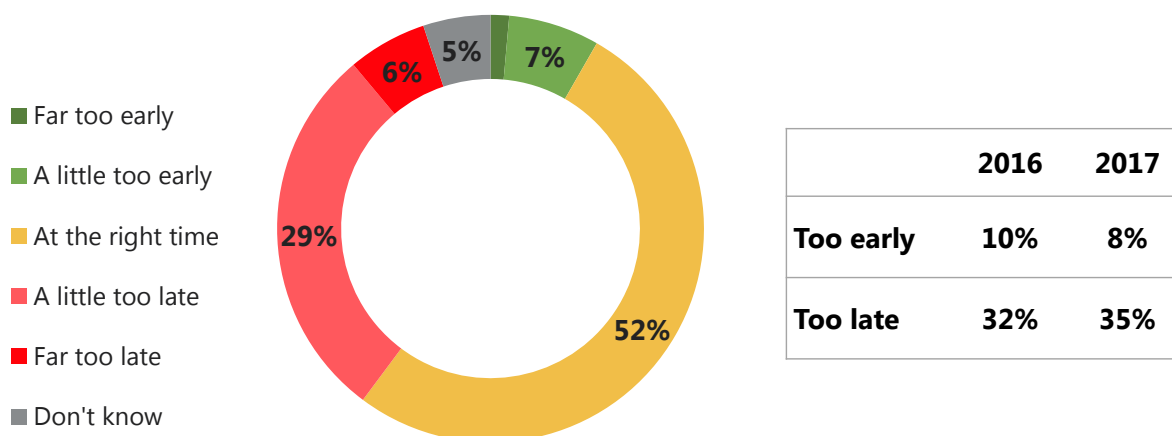
Base: TFEAs who offer more than two types of help or support to Troubled Families claimants (214): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017

*New code in 2017. (QTFEA7)

Half of TFEAs feel that employment support is offered to claimants at the right time, but a third think it is offered too late.

Half of TFEAs (52%) think that employment support is being offered to families on the programme at about the right time. However, a third (35%) say that it is offered too late. Just eight per cent think it is offered too early. This is consistent with the findings in 2016.

In general, would you say that employment support is being offered by TFEAs, to families too early, too late or at about the right time during their time on the programme?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q2TFEA)

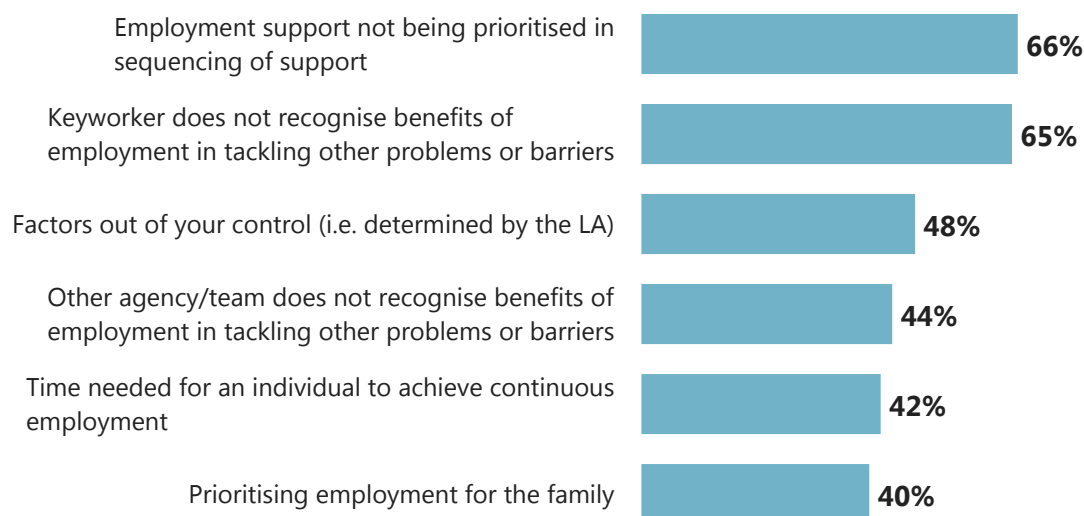
TFEAs who feel employment support is not offered at the right time say it happens because employment support is not prioritised or recognised as beneficial in terms of tackling other problems.

In 2017, TFEAs were asked a new question to explore why some think employment support is not offered at the right time. From a given list of options, most identify issues with partners not prioritising employment support early enough in the process, including:

- 66% who say it is not prioritised in the sequencing of support.
- 65% reporting that most keyworkers do not recognise the benefits of employment in tackling other problems or barriers.
- 48% citing factors out of their control.
- 44% who say that other agencies / teams do not recognise the benefits of employment in tackling other problems or barriers.

In addition, 42% say more time is needed for an individual to achieve continuous employment.

Why would you say employment advice is being offered by TFEAs to families too early/too late during their time on the programme?



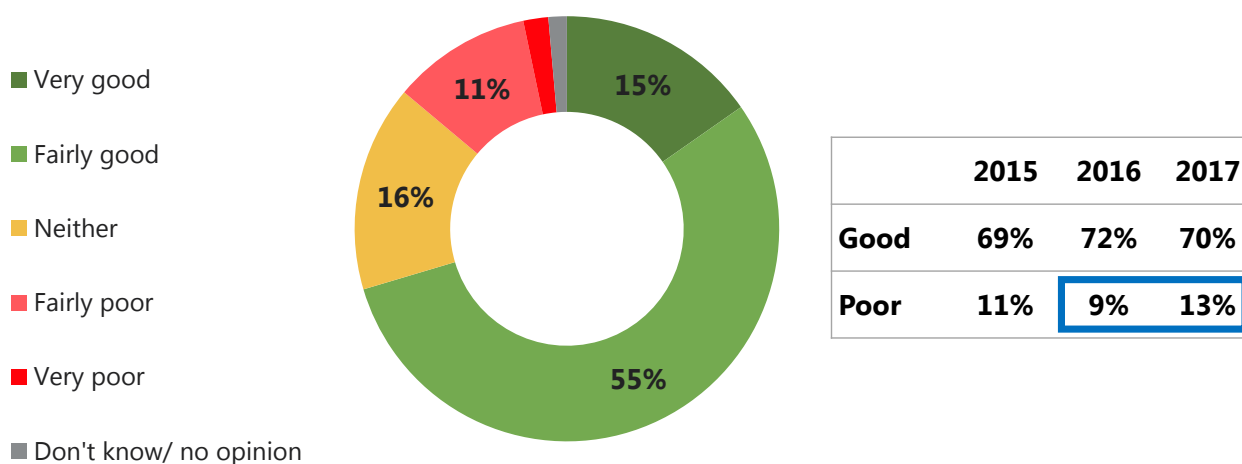
Base: TFEAs who think employment support is not offered at the right time (93); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (W3QTFEA2)

TFEAs are generally positive about the training opportunities available for Troubled Families Programme claimants.

TFEAs are, on the whole, positive about the education and training opportunities available for Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area. Seven in ten (70%) rate them as either very or fairly good, just one in ten (13%) say the education and training opportunities are poor.

This is similar to findings from the 2016 and 2015 surveys.

How good or poor would you say that the education and training opportunities available for Troubled Families claimants are in your Jobcentre Plus area?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA10)

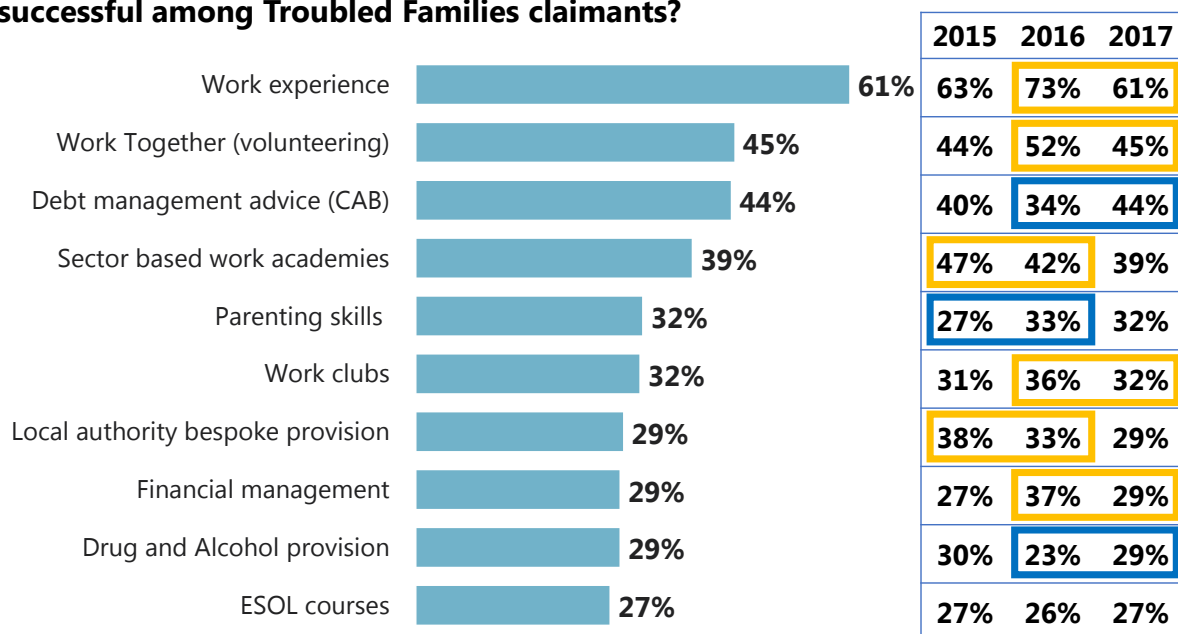
Work experience is considered the most successful type of training opportunity for claimants.

TFEAs were asked to identify which types of education and training opportunities are most successful for Troubled Families claimants. Reflecting the fact that work experience is seen as the most important type of support that TFEAs can offer they also identify this as the most successful education and training opportunity (61%).

Work Together (volunteering) and debt management advice (from the Citizen's Advice Bureau) are also seen as important (mentioned by 45% and 44%, respectively).

Notable changes across waves include fewer TFEAs identifying work experience (61% in 2017, compared with 73% in 2016) and Work Together (45% in 2017, compared with 52% in 2016) as successful education or training opportunities. More TFEAs select debt management advice (44% in 2017, compared with 34% in 2016) and drug and alcohol provision (29% in 2017, compared with 23% in 2016) as successful. However, most of these changes represent a return to findings in 2015.

Which of the following types of education and training opportunities, if any, are most successful among Troubled Families claimants?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
Top ten response in 2017 shown. (QTFEA11)

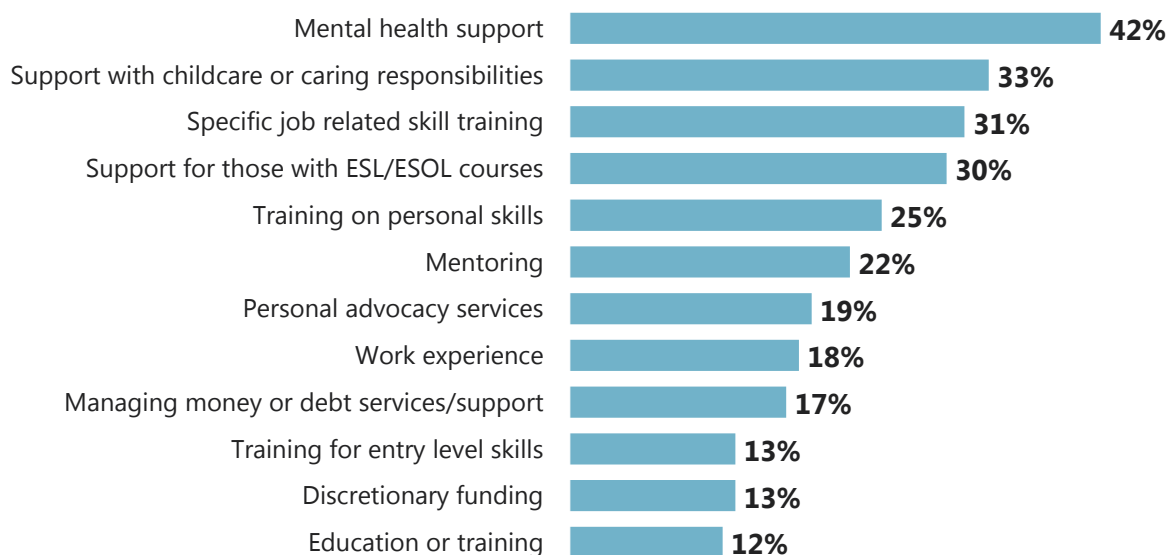
Mental health support is most commonly perceived as a gap in provision for Troubled Families claimants.

Training opportunities

TFEAs highlight several types of help or support where they feel there are gaps in provision for Troubled Families claimants in their area. The most frequently mentioned is mental health support, cited by two in five (42%) TFEAs.

A third of TFEAs (33%) point to gaps in support with childcare or caring responsibilities, as well as specific job-related skills training (31%). Additionally, a gap in provision for those with ESL (English as a second language) or ESOL (English to speakers of other languages) courses is identified by a similar proportion (30%). TFEAs would also like more training in personal skills for claimants (25%), mentoring (22%) and advocacy services (19%).

In which, if any, of the following types of help and support are there gaps in provision for Troubled Families claimants in your Jobcentre Plus area?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
Responses mentioned by 10% or more of TFEAs shown. (QTFEA8)

TFEAs want more mental health support and advisers to be available.

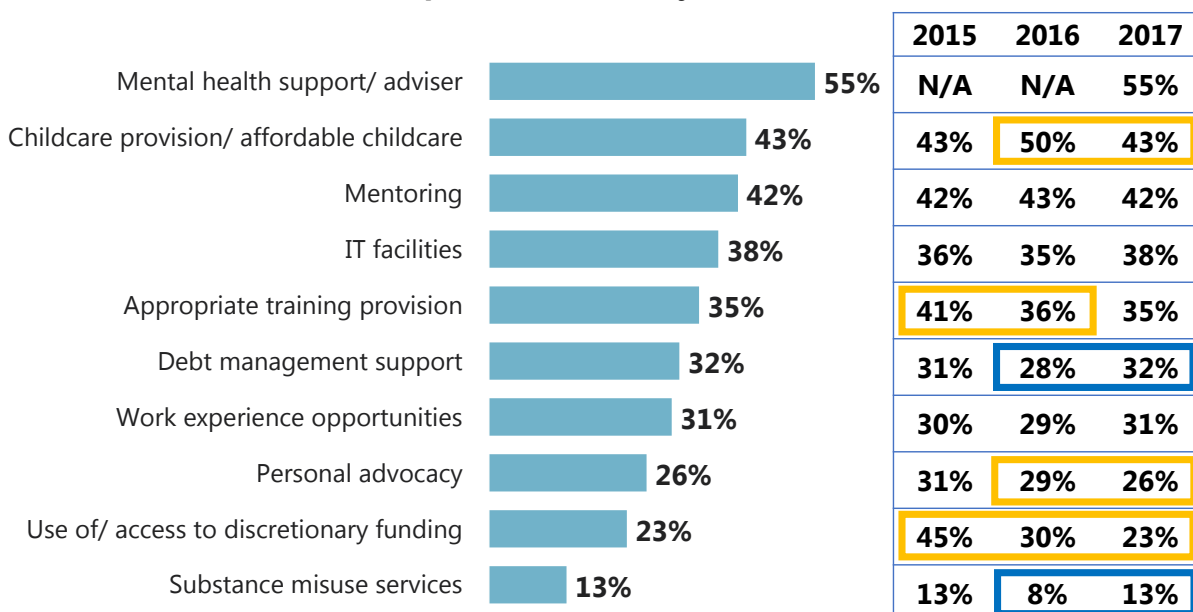
Additional resources required

Reflecting the perceived gap in mental health support, more than half (55%) of TFEAs identify a need for additional mental health support to help them address the most common problems faced by Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area.

Around two in five would like additional provision relating to childcare (43%), mentoring resources (42%), IT facilities (38%), and appropriate training provision (35%). Again, these match the gaps identified by TFEAs.

These additional resources or provision are similar to those identified as necessary in 2016, but mental health support/adviser was included for the first time in 2017; now topping the list and reflecting the priority that TFEAs place on mental health support elsewhere in the research.

What additional resources or provision, if any, do you need in your Jobcentre Plus area to address the most common problems faced by Troubled families claimants?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.

NB: 'Mental health support/ adviser' added in 2017 as a precode, as such a degree of caution should be taken in comparing trend data. (QTFEA12)

Provision for Troubled Families Programme claimants - Summary

Work experience is identified as being the most effective approach in terms of achieving positive outcomes for claimants and as the most successful form of education and training opportunity available for Troubled Families claimants.

While half of TFEAs think that **employment support is being offered at the right time** to families on the Troubled Families Programme, **a third think that it is being offered too late**, typically because it is not being prioritised in the sequencing of support or as a perceived consequence of keyworkers not realising the benefits of employment in tackling other problems or barriers.

TFEAs highlight several common types of help or support where they feel there are **gaps in provision** for Troubled Families claimants in their local area. The most frequently mentioned is **mental health support**. Reflecting this perceived gap, more than half of TFEAs identify a **need for additional mental health support/ an adviser** to address the most common problems faced by Troubled Families claimants in their Jobcentre Plus area.

In terms of debt services, TFEAs feel that more can be done; for example, one in five (21%) say that managing money debt services / support is effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants and two in five (44%) say that the debt management advice available is successful. However, a third (32%) would still like additional debt management provision to support claimants and one in five (17%) point to a gap in this provision.

5. Workforce development

Training

Support and supervision

Developing TFEA skills

5 Workforce development

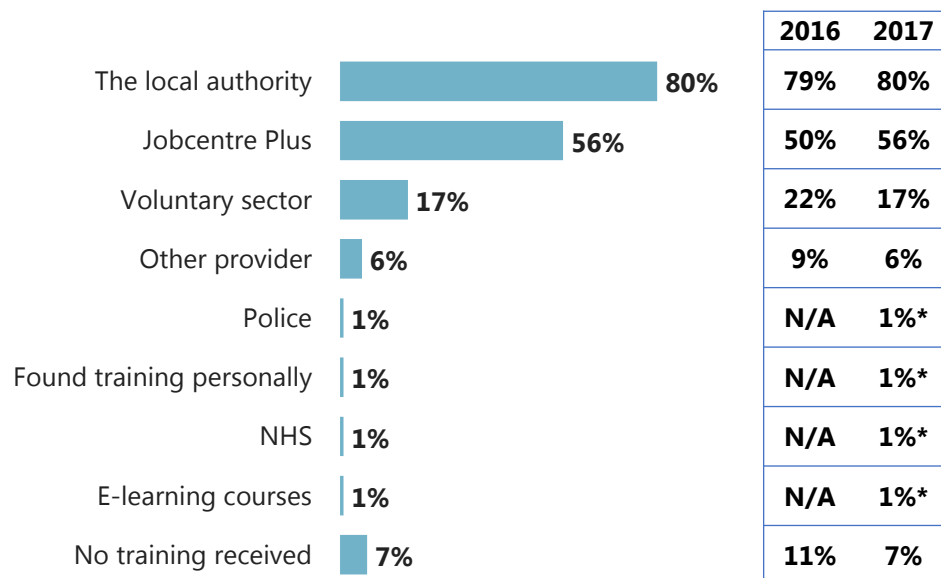
Local authorities are the main training provider for TFEAs, followed by the Jobcentre Plus.

Training

The majority of TFEAs (80%) have received some training from their local authority. More than half (56%) have received training from Jobcentre Plus and one in five (17%) have attended training provided by the voluntary sector. However, seven per cent of TFEAs have not received any training.

The chart below illustrates responses to this question in 2016 and 2017. It is important to note that a number of categories were introduced for the first time in 2017, so with more options to choose from in the most recent survey, fewer TFEAs select any single category.

If you attended any training, who was responsible for providing the training you have received?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (W2Q4TFEA)

*New code added in 2017

Most TFEAs are positive about the amount, quality and relevance of training they have received, a similar pattern to findings in 2015 and 2016.

TFEAs are positive about the training they have received. More say that the quality of training they have received in relation to delivering their role with Troubled Families is good (70%), rather than poor (7%). A third (32%) of TFEAs strongly agree with this statement.

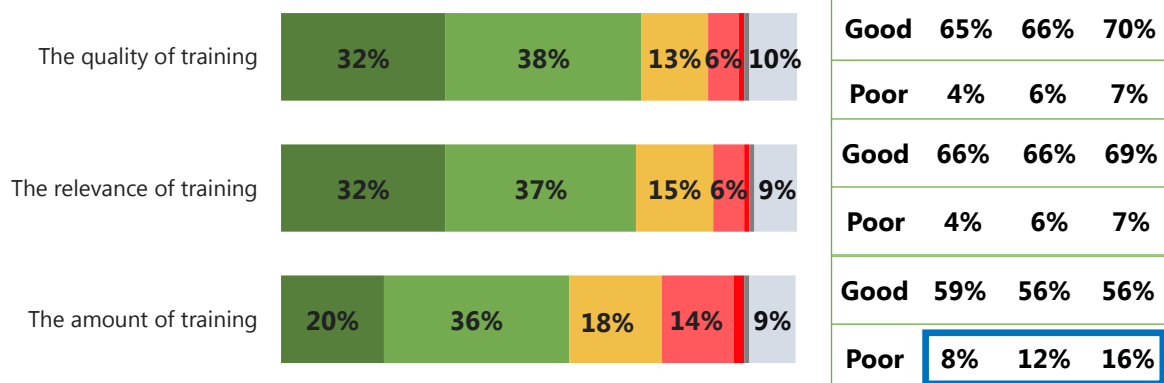
Most TFEAs (69%) rate the training as good in terms of it being relevant to delivering their role. A third consider the training to be very good (32%) in terms of its relevance, just seven per cent feel that it is poor. Again, this finding is consistent across all three waves of the research.

Three in five (56%) feel that the amount of training in relation to delivering their role within the Troubled Families Programme is good. One in six (16%) say it is poor, and 18% are unsure.

This is very similar to findings from both the 2016 and 2015 surveys, although there has been an increase in the proportion rating the amount of training as poor over time.

How would you rate the quality of the following aspects of the training you have received in relation to delivering your role with Troubled Families?

■ Very good ■ Fairly good ■ Neither good nor poor
■ Fairly poor ■ Very poor ■ Don't know/no opinion
■ No specific training provided



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017

*New statement added in 2017. (QTFEA16a-c) Percentages only shown if 3% or more

TFEAs are positive about support and supervision, but fewer agree they have regular three-way meetings with managers.

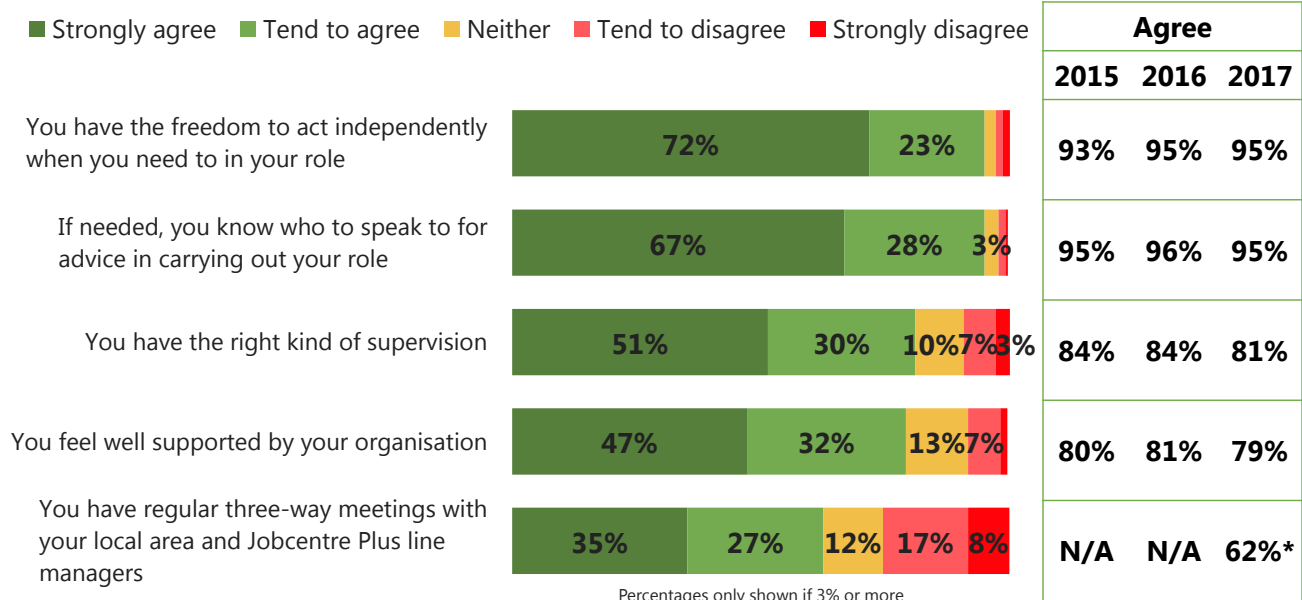
Support and supervision

Since 2015 TFEAs have been asked to consider the extent to which they agree or disagree with a range of statements relating to the support and supervision they receive, with a new statement included in 2017 focusing on liaison with Jobcentre Plus and local area line managers.

Consistent with previous findings, TFEAs are very positive about the support and supervision available for them in their role. Nearly all report that, if needed, they would know who to speak to for advice in carrying out their role and feel they have the freedom to act independently when they need to (both 95%). In addition, four in five TFEAs feel that they have the right kind of supervision (81%) and say they are well supported by their organisation (79%).

Slightly fewer agree they have regular three-way meetings with their local area and Jobcentre Plus line managers (62%), and a quarter (25%) disagree.

To what extent would you agree or disagree that...



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017

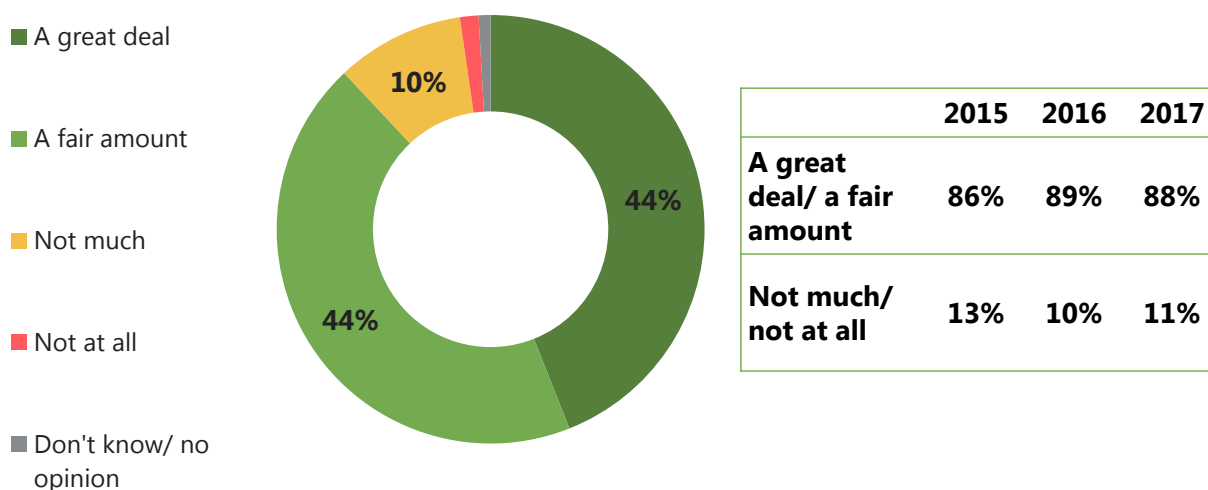
*New statement added in 2017. (QTFEA17)

TFEAs are also positive about opportunities to share and learn from good practice locally.

Most TFEAs (88%) say that they have at least a fair amount of opportunity to share and learn from good practice within their local authority Jobcentre Plus or local authority area; including 44% who say that they have a great deal of opportunity.

However, one in ten (11%) feel they do not have much opportunity or no opportunity at all. This is similar to feedback in 2015 and 2016, as shown in the chart below.

To what extent would you say that you have the opportunity to share and learn from good practice locally within your Jobcentre Plus/ local authority area?



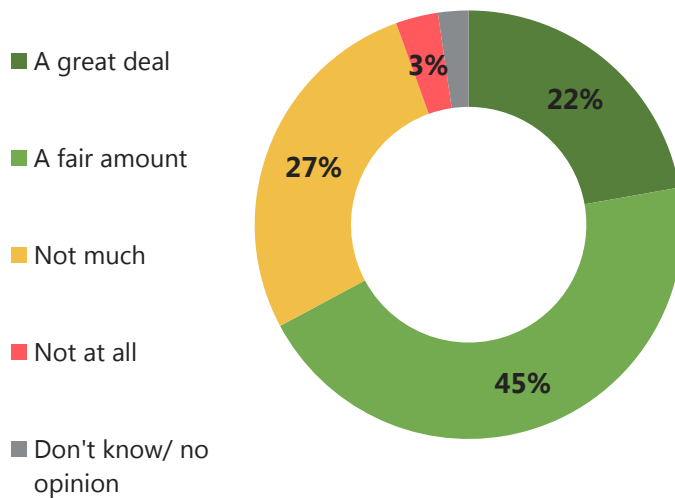
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA19)

The majority of TFEAs think the Troubled Families Programme has prompted changes in the way Work Coaches work with claimants more generally.

Two thirds (67%) of TFEAs would say that working with families on the programme has prompted changes in the way Work Coaches work with claimants more generally, although only 22% say there has been a great deal of change.

Three in ten (30%) feel there has *not* been very much change in the way Work Coaches work with claimants, but just three per cent say there has been no change at all.

To what extent would you say that working with families on the Troubled Families Programme has prompted changes in the way Work Coaches work with claimants more generally?



	2016	2017
A great deal/ a fair amount	63%	67%
Not very much/ not at all	35%	30%

Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q5TFEA)

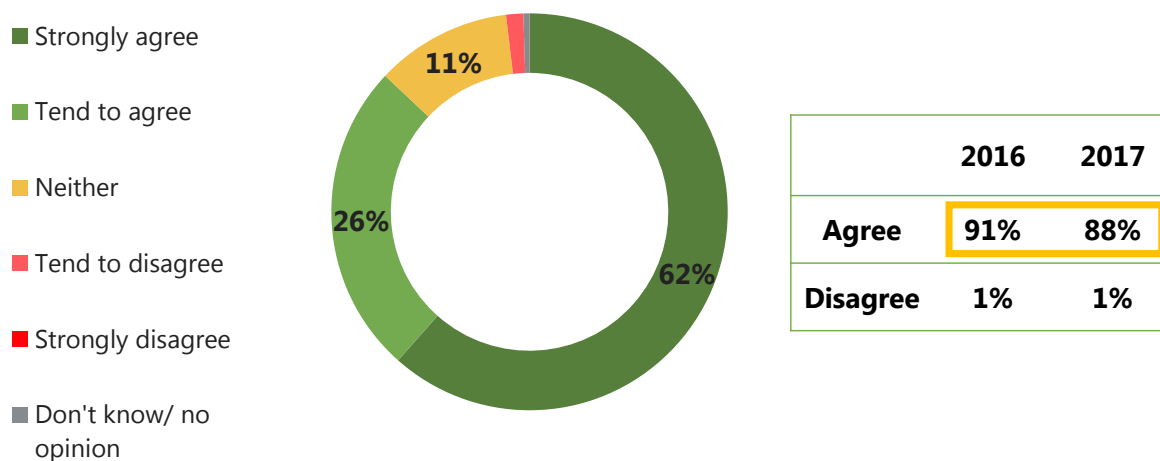
TFEAs are keen to develop their skills to help them deliver effective services for families.

Developing TFEA skills

Most TFEAs (88%) agree that they would like to develop their skills further to help them deliver effective services for families, with three in five (62%) *strongly* agreeing.

Interest in developing skills further is a consistent message from TFEAs, as shown in the chart below.

Troubled Families involves different ways of working for staff across public services. To what extent would you agree that you would like to develop your skills further to help you deliver effective services for families?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q3TFEA)

Workforce development - Summary

The most common training providers for TFEAs are local authorities, and, to a lesser extent, Jobcentre Plus, and while almost all TFEAs have attended some form of training, a significant *minority* rate the **amount of training** they have had in relation to their role with Troubled Families as poor. Having said that, in the context of the training they have received, TFEAs general perception is that it is **good in terms of quality and relevance**. This is a consistent message across all three waves of the research with TFEAs. Interest in **developing skills further** to help deliver effective services for families is also a recurrent theme.

In line with previous waves, TFEAs are very **positive about the support and supervision** available for them in their role. Nearly all report that, if needed, they would **know who to speak to for advice** in carrying out their role, feel they have the **freedom to act independently** but also have **the right kind of supervision** and are **well supported by their organisation**.

The majority of TFEAs say that working with families on the Troubled Families Programme has prompted **changes in the way Work Coaches work** with claimants generally, although a significant minority feel there has either *not* been very much change or no change at all.

A quarter (25%) of TFEAs disagree that they regularly have three-way management meetings with their local area and Jobcentre Plus line managers.

6. Multi-agency working

Working with partner services

Support from partners

Barriers to effective partnership working

6 Multi-agency working

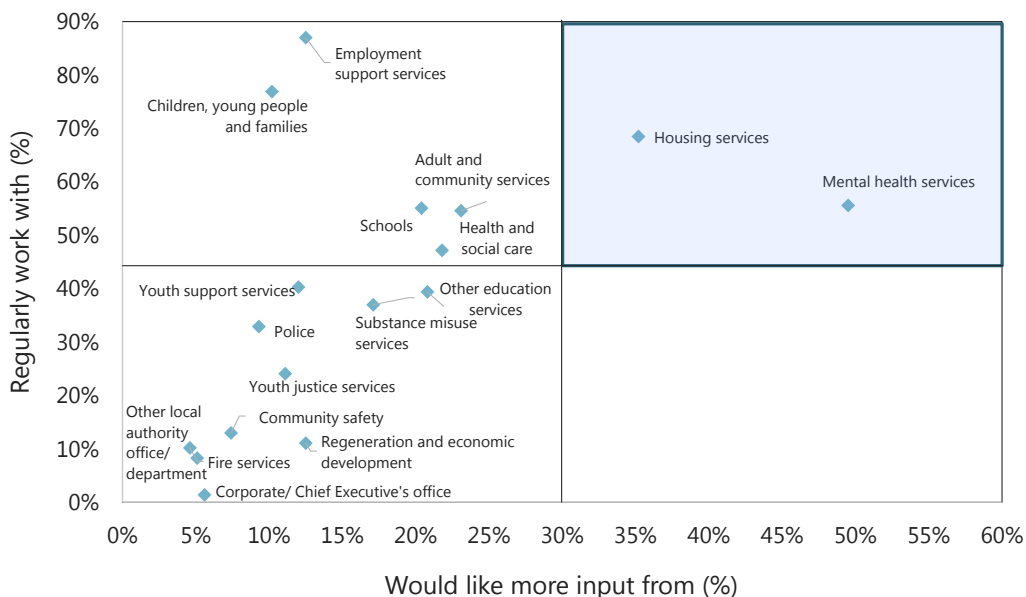
TFEAs would like greater input from mental health and housing services.

Working with partner services

TFEAs regularly work with a wide range of services to deliver solutions for families. They are most likely to report working with employment support services (87% had worked with this service) and those offering services to children, young people and families (77%). Many TFEAs also work regularly with housing services (69%), mental health services (56%), schools (55%) and adult and community services (55%).

The chart below plots those services TFEAs work with most regularly against those they would like more input from, in relative terms; the bottom left hand quadrant includes the services they work with less frequently but feel they have sufficient input from; the top left includes those worked with more frequently but again, most feel that the level of input is good; the top right indicates those services that TFEAs would like more input from even though they are among those they already work with most regularly. This analysis identifies housing and mental health as the two services that TFEAs would like more input from, a finding that is consistent with the pattern found in both 2015 and 2016.

Services TFEAs regularly work with compared with those they would like more input from



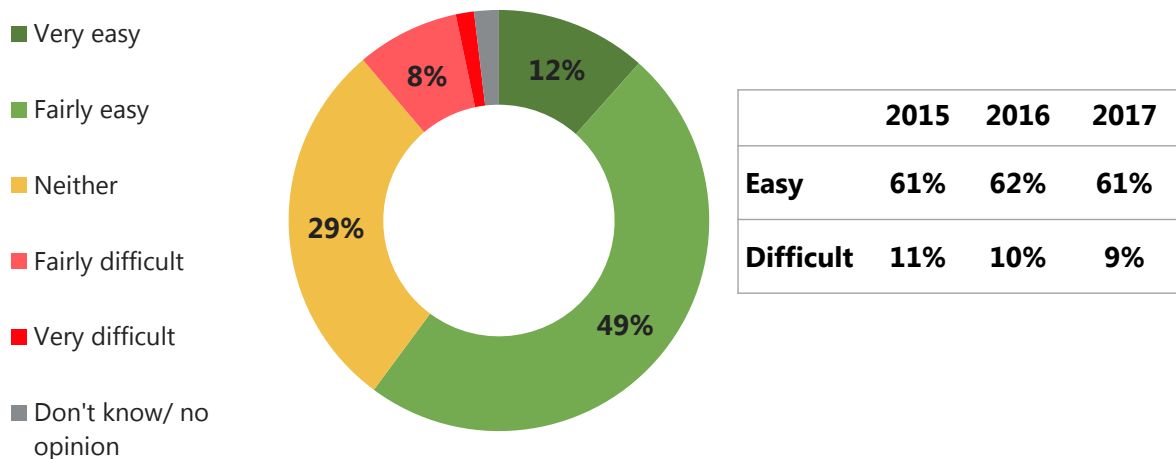
Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFEA20, QTFEA21)

There is evidence of room for improvement in terms of how easy it is for TFEAs to get support from partner organisations.

Support from partners

Three in five (61%) TFEAs say it is easy to get the support they need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families but there is evidence of room for improvement; more say it is *fairly* easy rather than *very* easy (49% and 12% respectively), and three in ten (29%) feel unable to express a view either way. This finding is unchanged over all three waves of the research.

In general, how easy or difficult would you say it is to get the support you need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families?



Base: All TFEAs (216): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFEA22)

Data sharing protocols are perceived as the main barrier to effective partnership working.

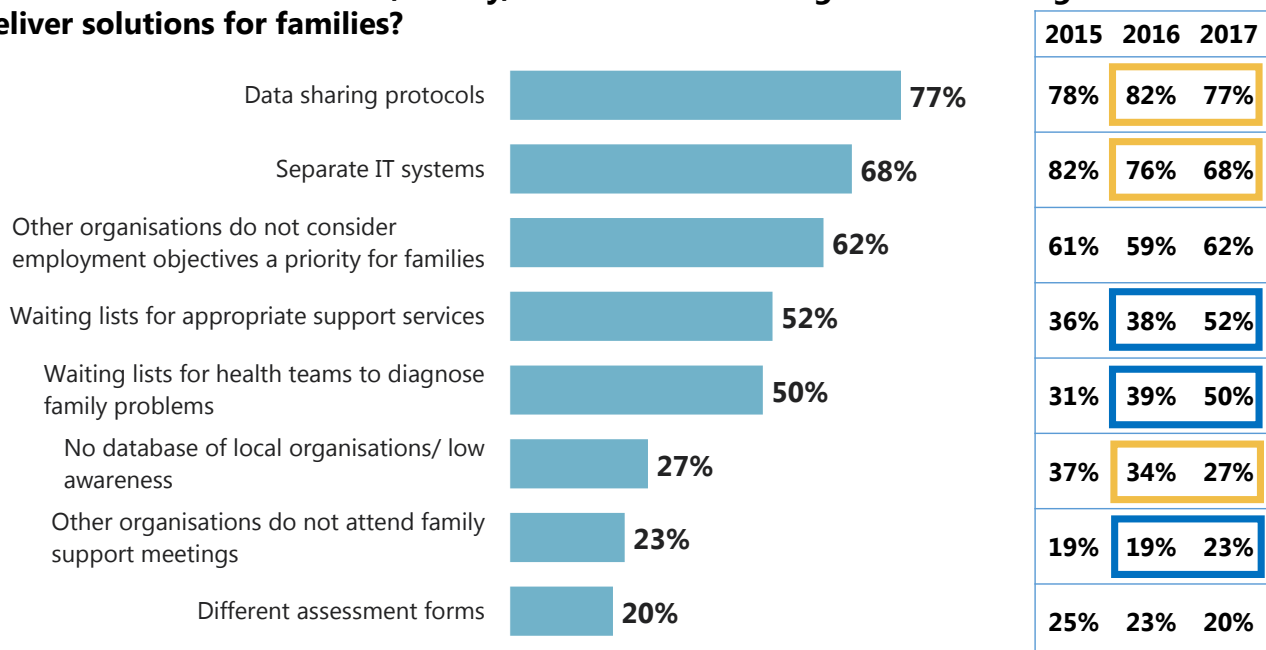
Barriers to effective partnership working

TFEAs report several barriers to effective working with other organisations in terms of delivering solutions for families. Data sharing protocols are the main barrier, identified by 77% of TFEAs, followed by separate IT systems (68%).

Three in five (62%) feel that other organisations do not consider employment objectives a priority for families and half identify waiting lists, both for appropriate support services and for health teams to diagnose family problems (52% and 50% respectively) as barriers to partnership working.

In comparison with 2016, fewer TFEAs in the most recent survey mention data sharing protocols, separate IT systems and having no database of local organisations as barriers. On the other hand, waiting lists for appropriate support services or health teams and other organisations not attending family meetings are more frequently mentioned in 2017.

What are the main barriers, if any, to effective working with other organisations to deliver solutions for families?



Base: All TFEAs (216); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFEA23)

Multi-agency working - Summary

TFEAs regularly work with a **wide range of services** to deliver solutions for families, identifying employment support services and those offering services to children, young people and families as their most common partners. However, going forward, TFEAs would like **more input from mental health services and housing services**.

The research findings suggest that there is still room for improvement in terms of making **access to support from partners** easier. Although most TFEAs say it is easy to get the support they need from partner organisations to deliver solutions for families, nearly a third are unsure and one in ten find it difficult.

Data sharing protocols and **separate IT systems** continue to be identified as the main barriers to more effective partnership working. However, in comparison with previous years, significantly fewer TFEAs regard **separate IT systems** as a barrier, instead they are more likely highlight **waiting lists for appropriate support services** and **waiting lists for health teams to diagnose family problems**.

7. Conclusions

7 Conclusions

This is the **third annual survey** of Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEAs) involved in delivering the Troubled Families Programme. The research set out to explore their views on the impact of the programme, particularly the role of the TFEA model. The **results are mostly consistent** with those found previously – both in terms of the TFEA role and their views of the programme.

Delivering the Troubled Families Programme – the TFEA role

Almost all (99%) of TFEAs surveyed work for **DWP/a Job Centre**. They are **experienced**; half (51%) have worked with DWP/Job Centre Plus for more than 20 years and almost all **previously worked in a specialist position**, for example, as a Work Coach/employment adviser (77%), lone parent adviser (38%), under 18s/NEET or outreach adviser (both 22%).

Almost all TFEAs spend at least a fair amount of their time working with **families with the most complex employment barriers (97%)** and this work is largely **face-to-face (95%)** with slightly fewer saying it includes **the whole family (76%)**. They have an average case load of 30 claimants, including 25 adults (aged 25+) and 5 NEETs (16-24 years); similar to 2016 (32 claimants) but an increase from 2015 (23 claimants).

These claimants most commonly face **employment barriers relating to health**, specifically mental health (74%) or another health problem or disability (38%), both of which have significantly increased as problems since 2016. Barriers relating to **childcare and other caring responsibilities** are also significant, but mentioned by fewer than in 2016 (39% and 45% respectively).

TFEAs feel supported in their role, and are **content with the level of support and supervision** provided while also feeling that they have the **freedom to act independently**. However, almost all (88%) **would like to develop their skills further**. The majority (80%) have attended some training delivered by the local authority in relation to their role and half (56%) have been to Jobcentre Plus training. Seven in ten rate the **quality and relevance of training** as good (70% and 69% respectively), with slightly fewer saying the **amount** available is good (56%). Views are also less positive in terms of having **regular three-way meetings with both Jobcentre Plus and local area line managers** (25% disagree that this is the case). These findings are all in line with previous waves, where asked.

TFEAs are positive about the Troubled Families Programme approach

TFEAs continue to be very supportive of the Troubled Families Programme approach and its key elements: 93% say it is effective at achieving long-term positive change in families' circumstances, and 92% agree that among the families they work with, employment advice significantly improves outcomes for the family as a whole.

TFEAs also consider that the impact of the Troubled Families Programme is felt more widely; more than four in five (86%) say it is effective at achieving long-term positive change in wider system reform or service transformation in their local authority.

Half (52%) say **whole family support** is important to ensure positive outcomes for Troubled Families Programme claimants are sustainable, but similar value is placed on **in-work and one-to-one support** (50% and 48% respectively) as well as **face-to-face meetings** with claimants (47%). Again, these views reflect those seen in the previous survey, though with a greater emphasis placed on one-to-one support this year.

TFEAs are **positive about the education and training opportunities** available for Troubled Families Programme claimants (70% say it is good), and consistently single out **work experience** as the most successful opportunity helping people into work (61%). Work experience also continues to be identified as effective in terms of positive outcomes for claimants (37%), but this year TFEAs were also asked about job search/interview preparation, which is rated similarly (36% select it as effective in terms of outcomes).

In terms of **debt management and advice**, TFEAs are more likely to recognise the success of training in this area (44% in 2017, compared with 34% in 2016), and would like more resources, with one in five (17%) identifying a gap in money management and debt support and a third (32%) wanting additional resources (also an increase from 2016, previously 28%).

Three quarters (76%) of TFEAs say they have the **right amount of time working face-to-face with families compared with other tasks**, and four in five (85%) agree that generally **the amount of time they have to work with Troubled Families Programme claimants allows them to make progress towards sustained employment outcomes**. However, while positive, this actually represents a significant decline over time, from 93% in 2015.

There is **evidence of competing demands and time pressure** in the role, with 20% saying they do not have enough time working with families. Perhaps related to this, while half (52%) feel families get employment support at the right time, 35% say it is given too late. This is most commonly explained as a result of a lack of focus on employment in the sequencing of support and keyworkers not recognising the impact of employment in tackling other problems (66% and 65% respectively).

Areas for development

The Troubled Families Programme aims to instigate significant changes in the design, management and delivery of local services. TFEAs are mostly positive about these changes and the benefits to claimants, but, as with the findings from both previous waves, there are inevitably a number of challenges:

Evidence of system change: TFEAs continue to feel that the Troubled Families Programme approach has encouraged a broader change in the way Work Coaches deal with claimants generally and that they have good opportunities to share and learn from good practice locally. However, these views are not strongly held, suggesting more could still be done to promote good practice more widely.

Most effective interventions for Troubled Families Programme claimants: work experience continues to be viewed as the most effective type of support that TFEAs can offer, suggesting that more opportunities in this area would be most helpful in terms of improving claimant outcomes. However, as before, this needs to be balanced with other requirements; when asked specifically about gaps in provision, mental health support and help with childcare/other caring responsibilities, job skills training and ESL support feature most highly. As a result, TFEAs would most like to see more mental health and childcare provision for claimants in order to address the most common problems they face.

Promoting genuine partnership working: while most say it is easy to get support from partners to deliver solutions, there is evidence of room for improvement, with TFEAs particularly singling out the need for greater input from mental health and housing services.

Improving systems to facilitate effective partnership working: as with previous findings, while the tools and systems underpinning multi-agency working are developing in most areas, there is more work to do. Data sharing protocols and separate IT systems continue to be identified as the main barriers to more effective partnership working by TFEAs. On the other hand, more mention waiting lists for appropriate support services and health teams in 2017.

Embedding employment support: one in five TFEAs do not feel they have sufficient time to work directly with families and one in three say that employment support is offered too late in the engagement, suggesting that it needs further embedding in the programme to ensure that it is

offered at the right time, either by greater prioritisation in the sequencing of support or by raising awareness among keyworkers of the benefits of this type of help in tackling other problems.

TFEA skills development: while most have had some training related to their TFEA role and are positive about the relevance, quality and amount provided, almost all would like to further develop their skills to enable them to deliver effective services for families. This has been a consistent finding from TFEAs year-on-year.

In addition, there is evidence that TFEAs are not always getting the support they need in terms of three-way management meetings with their local area and Jobcentre Plus line managers. A quarter (25%) disagree that they regularly have three-way management meetings with them.

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