

Annex 1: Our ways of working and how we engage with others

Who we are

We are an independent advisory group of professionals and representatives from across the children's sector who work together to provide expertise, constructive challenge and evidence based advice to improve children and young people's health outcomes and to drive up standards of care. Our role is to identify the health outcomes that matter most for children and young people, to raise the key issues that need to be addressed to achieve these outcomes, highlight and prioritise these issues, and provide constructive challenge and recommendations to support the delivery of these outcomes.

We have a wide membership of individuals, many of whom are drawn from key organisations that contribute to improving children and young people's health outcomes. As a Forum we bring together a range of specialist expertise, knowledge and influence from across the children and young people's health and wellbeing sector. We provide value through our collective expertise and real time influence within the system. This year we have provided recommendations to Government in response to three key issues of current importance to children and young people's health outcomes; as outlined in Chapter Three. We are co-chaired by Professor Ian Lewis, Medical Director, Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust and Christine Lenehan, Director, Council for Disabled Children.

Our goals are to create a culture to:

- Improve children and young people's health and wellbeing so that it is amongst the best in the world;
- Improve the experience, safety and delivery of all services in all sectors for children, young people and families;
- Ensure that children and young people fully participate, meaning they are visible, engaged with, and that their voices are "heard and heeded";
- Ensure that there is a focus upon prevention, early identification, appropriate assessment and timely intervention;
- Reduce variations and ensure that children and young people have equity of outcomes of physical and mental health care services that are appropriate to their ages and needs,
- To support and promote the development of outcome measures and other measures relevant for both the life course of children and young people and services, which will drive improvement and learning within the system.

How we decide our priorities

We meet quarterly as a full Forum, and this includes a two day annual summit. We have finite time and resources so we collectively act as a catalyst and decide upon our priorities and what work we will undertake. These must:

- Be important to children, young people and families;
- Be practical, evidence based and solution focussed, with a clear impact to improve children and young people's health outcomes;
- Support better experience from a child and young person's perspective;
- Reinforce prevention at every level;
- Provide potential for significant improvement and learning.

To decide and agree our priorities we consider the following:

- The views of children, young people and their families, though engagement with key stakeholders;
- Values derived from The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child¹;
- Our previous learning and recommendations and what progress has been made;
- What work is being undertaken by others, where the gaps are, and where we can best add value as an independent, expert advisory group;
- Issues of national importance;
- Where there are variations in care and inequity;
- Where there is evidence of potentially large health gains or 'quick wins'.

What we do and how we do it

Our work is focused upon:

- 'Cross-cutting issues' that are important for different groups of children and young people, and that cut across the priorities and work of different organisations;
- Life course approaches;
- Specific pathways relevant to particular cohorts of children and young people;
- Creating networks and the integration of teams with a clear focus on quality improvement;
- Embedding a culture of innovation and learning across all services; and
- Task focused activity to provide expertise, advice and recommendations for specific current issues.

¹ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/Our-mission/UN-Convention/>

We identified cross cutting issues that are important to children and young people's health outcomes in our report published in July 2012 and our subsequent recommendations to Government. We hold strategic discussions on these issues at our quarterly meetings and, where we can add best value, we take forward work through pathway groups or task focused work. We also continue to promote and support the development of outcome indicators for children and young people, in line with our recommendations published in July 2012.

We have five 'Pathway Groups' focused upon the following: acute illness, long term conditions and disability; mental health; 0-5 public health; and 5-19 public health. Each Pathway Group provides and accesses specialist expertise to identify key priorities and to make recommendations.

As a Forum we provide a collective source of expertise in children and young people's health and, as outlined in Chapter 3, we undertake task focused work where we can best add value in response to specific requests for our advice and recommendations.

Our resources

Our key resource is our membership. Our participation is voluntary and we receive reimbursement of expenses from the Department of Health. We receive strategic support and secretariat from the Department of Health.

How we communicate and engage with others

Information about the Forum can be found on our found on our webpage click [here](#) . This provides information about who we are (including a membership list) what we do and how to contact us. Copies of our latest reports and recommendations can be downloaded.

We work closely with leaders across the system to promote and support the improvement of children and young people's health outcomes. Senior members of the Department of Health, NHS England, Public Health England and CQC attend our meetings in ex-officio capacity, which has enabled a valuable dialogue between Forum members and these organisations. The Forum co-chairs are members of the Chief Medical Officer's Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Board, which meets twice a year to provide strategic overview and challenge to ensure the delivery of the system-wide pledge for better health outcomes for children and young people. We also work with the national Children Health and Wellbeing Partnership to support them to develop their work programme through thematic seminars. The Partnership brings together key national organisations to lead and commission work which requires a multi-agency approach to improve children and young people's health outcomes.

We are keen to engage with children and young people in a meaningful way. There are a range of children and young people's forums and networks which provide valuable insight, contribution and advice on children and young people's health. This year, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's Youth Advisory Panel participated in our annual summit and have made a valuable contribution to our work. We will work with children and young people's forums and networks during the next phase of our work.

We recognise the importance of communicating and engaging with people across the health, care and education system and wider children and young people's sector. We will publish a monthly newsletter, to be available on our website, to provide information and updates on our work.

Further information can be found in our stakeholder engagement and communications strategy in Annex [\[insert number\]](#).