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Research Report DFE-RR248

Evaluation of the SEND Pathfinder Programme

Interim Evaluation Report

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

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Acknowledgements and terminology

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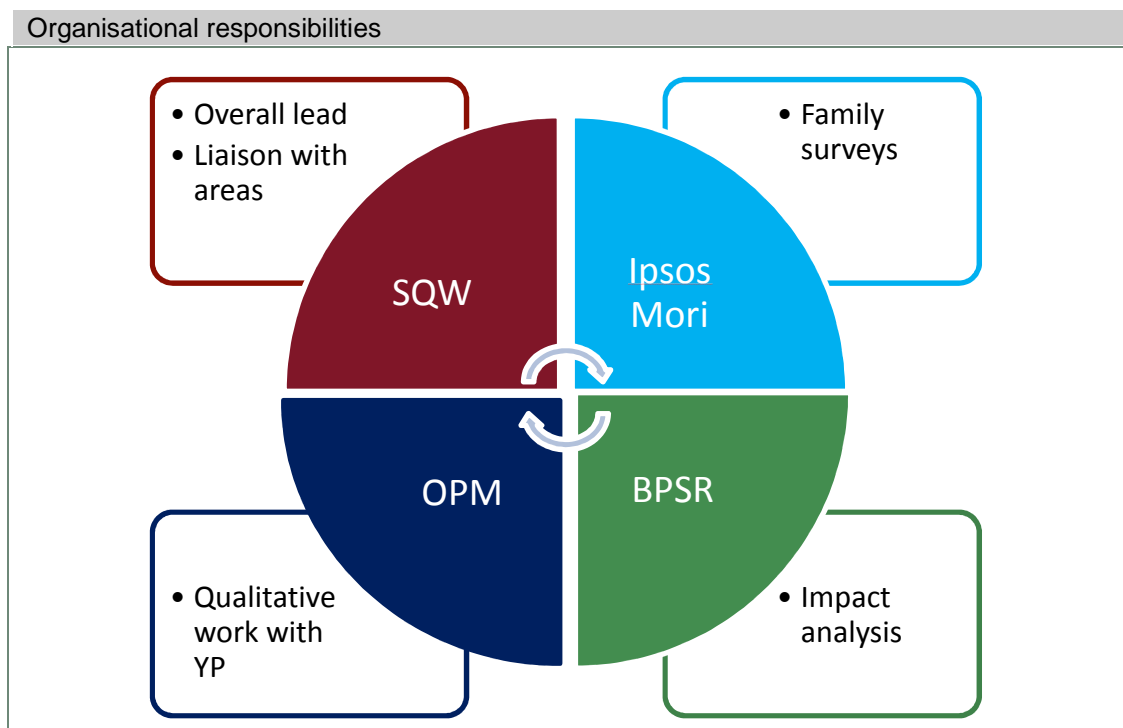
Terminology

The report makes regular use of the following short-hand terminology and acronyms:

- CDF – Common Delivery Framework
- Families with children with SEND – families with children with disabilities, children with special educational needs and young people with learning difficulty assessments
- IBs – individual budgets
- PBs – personal budgets
- PHB – personal health budgets
- PST – Pathfinder Support Team
- SEN – special educational needs
- SEND – special educational needs and disability
- SEN DPs – special educational needs direct payments
- VCS – voluntary and community sector.

The team

SQW was commissioned by the Department for Education to lead a consortium, including Ipsos MORI, BPSR and the Office of Public Management (OPM), to undertake the evaluation of the SEND Green Paper Pathfinder Programme. The team draws together a wide range of complementary experience. Each organisation has a distinct role to contribute to the effective evaluation the Programme as shown in the diagram below.



Source: SQW

The Evaluation team

Graham Thom, a Director at SQW, acts as the Project Director of the Evaluation.

Meera Prabhakar, a Senior Consultant at SQW, acts as the Project Manager of the Evaluation.

Rhian Johnson, Laura Henderson, Sheila Sim, Charlotte Clarke, Kerry Fox, Rachel Redman and Tarran Macmillan form the other members of the SQW research team.

Claire Lambert, an Associate Director, acts as the lead for Ipsos MORI.

Susan Purdon and **Caroline Bryson** act as the leads from BPSR.

Annie Hedges acts as the lead for OPM.

Executive summary

1. This report is the fourth in a series of progress reports that will be produced throughout the course of the 18 month evaluation of the SEND Pathfinder programme. The first three reports - *The Evaluation Briefing Report Jan 2012*, and the *March and June 2012 Quarterly Evaluation Reports* – are available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/b0075291/green-paper/evaluation>. It also covers the SEN Direct Payments (SEN DPs) pilot programme.
2. This report is based on evidence gathered through:
 - The second set of monitoring returns received from all Pathfinder areas, which detailed self-reported progress against the Common Delivery Framework (CDF) from April to June 2012 (i.e. Quarter 1 of 2012/13)
 - Ten in-depth case study areas, each of which participated in a second-round case study visit over the course of June-July 2012
 - A further 10 case studies focussed on SEN DPs.

Organisational engagement and cultural change

3. Nearly all Pathfinder areas had successfully set up governance structures and delivery teams, and had developed a set of local objectives for their Pathfinder, which is encouraging. However, a couple remained at an embryonic stage.
4. There appeared to have been broad strategic involvement in Pathfinder governance structures from across most parties by June 2012. A common group of stakeholders continued to be prominent in the governance of most Pathfinders including: professionals from Local Authority education and children's services, and Parent Carer Forums/representatives, health, adult care, schools and the local VCS. However, the scale and quality of representation from health remained an issue caused by lack of capacity to support developments on the part of the health professionals involved. Engagement of children and young people in the development of the Pathfinder had also been very limited to date.
5. Although most areas had engaged the VCS at a strategic level, evidence from the case studies illustrated a number of Pathfinders (including both statutory services

and the VCS) were uncertain about the purpose and role that they could play in delivering elements of the Pathfinder, which had led to limited involvement on the part of the VCS to date. Uncertainty of direction had also delayed some areas in developing their Local Offer.

6. Areas that had project development teams in place were more likely to have made more progress: developing the infrastructure required to deliver the Pathfinder; developing and delivering change management processes; and raising awareness and recruiting families and young people to take part in the Pathfinder. The majority of services had committed at least some staff time to support Pathfinder development. Services appeared to be more willing to commit staff time to support the development of the Pathfinder, as opposed to money for development or service provision (for the single plans).
7. Most areas had begun to develop their change management processes and some had subsequently progressed to delivering these. However, the pace of progress appeared slow, which is likely to reflect the complex nature of the changes Pathfinder areas have been tasked to trial.

Progress engaging and involving families and young people

8. Most areas were part way through their awareness raising activities by the end of June 2012, and as a consequence, most had begun to recruit families and young people to participate in their Pathfinder. By mid-August 2012, 20 of the Pathfinder areas had registered on the monitoring tool that they had recruited a total of 313 families and young people (due to a lag between recruitment and registering it may be that the actual number is slightly higher). There appeared to be a bias towards the recruitment of families that were already accessing services. Lower than expected numbers may raise issues in terms of the scalability of the approaches being developed, while the focus on existing families could mean that further new approaches still have to be developed to improve the assessment process.
9. Recruitment included children and young people from across the 0-25 age range and spectrum of SEN, although recruitment of young people aged 19+ years was somewhat lower than other age groups.

Progress setting up the Pathfinder infrastructure

10. Progress against the setting up the infrastructure theme of the CDF was mixed, with some Pathfinder areas reporting good progress across the majority of the elements,

whilst others had made little progress and remained a cause for concern. Those that had made more progress tended to be the areas that had a full project development team in place, signalling the need for dedicated resource.

11. It appeared that the primary focus for most areas had been the development of a local assessment and single planning pathway, which included consideration of assessment/review, planning and the single planning document. Most areas had either fully or partially mapped out their single assessment and plan pathway, with a number also having developed a single plan template
12. Emerging evidence indicated that these pathways were more commonly expected to consist of:
 - Assessments - a set of assessments (by different agencies being brought together) OR a single assessment episode supplemented by ad hoc specialist assessments OR an initial assessment by one agency, systematically topped up by other agencies, all of which would be multi-agency and outcomes-based. However, most areas intended to recruit families that were already in the system and were focusing on streamlining the review as opposed to the assessment process
 - Planning – single planning events and the use of a planning coordinator to create the plan with the family and liaise with professionals from relevant agencies to obtain their input, both of which would require significant changes to be made to existing working practices
13. Evidence from the case studies illustrated that all areas intended to trial a single multi-agency, holistic plan that would be contained in a single document combining both the results of the assessment/review and the plan. However, resourcing and accountability of the plan had not been fully considered.
14. Areas that had made good progress developing an assessment and planning pathway also tended to be at an advanced stage of considering how to coordinate and deliver their new approach. This had included consideration of the skills and capacity that would be required to deliver effective key working, which was seen as important in developing plans, and had led most of the case study areas to look to use existing staff to resource this aspect of the Pathfinder.

SEN Direct Payments

15. Areas were exploring a range of budgets for possible inclusion in SEN DP offers, with most initially focusing on the inclusion of transport budgets since they were viewed as relatively straightforward to disaggregate. There was general uncertainty about what else might be piloted with a few targeting year groups. Others were starting with families that already had support and seeing if any element could be disaggregated; or families who appeared dissatisfied and seeing if a direct payment could provide flexibility to enable them to find a more satisfactory solution.
16. Most areas were at an early stage in relation to raising awareness about SEN DPs with prospective families and recruiting them to the pilot. At this stage in the pilot, there was little indication of what the possible take-up of SEN DPs was likely to be from families.
17. Ten of the case study areas had begun engaging schools and three had also begun engaging colleges. Responses to-date had been mixed and initial indications were that a relatively small number of schools and colleges were likely to engage with the SEN DP pilot at this stage.
18. Areas and education providers identified a range of challenges and risks associated with SEN DPs. These included concerns around commissioning and equality of provision, skills and capacity gaps, and the implications for resource planning.

Conclusions and implications

19. Having reached the half-way stage of the 18 month Programme, the majority of Pathfinder areas had reached the end of their initial set-up phase and were part-way through developing the infrastructure required to deliver the new approaches. As would be expected, some areas have advanced more quickly than others. That said, some of the areas which appear slow to recruit families have sought to develop their new approaches before doing so, while other areas have tried to develop their approaches as they take the first families through.
20. Although the Pathfinder areas have done well in setting up structures and plans and therefore appear to have the right things in place to move forward, this has not necessarily led to progress of the scale or speed anticipated at the time of scoping across all elements of the CDF. These challenges appeared to reflect both resource constraints and difficulties in thinking through and developing new approaches.

Therefore, it may be helpful to provide more explicit guidance and direction on those elements where more limited progress has been made.

21. There is also a high risk that:
- Family-led processes are introduced which provide families and young people with more choice and control but insufficient market development is undertaken to provide any real choice in service/support provision, leaving families empowered yet frustrated
 - Personal budgets become more of a money management mechanism than an integral part of the Pathfinder assessment and planning pathway
 - In the absence of sufficient Government direction, multi-agency working sees some improvement during the Pathfinder Programme and then drops back to the default position post this period. Much rests on the proposals for joint commissioning to overcome this risk.
22. The current pace of progress and associated recruitment of families and young people is behind that expected at scoping and unlikely to provide sufficient evidence to provide comprehensive responses to the four evaluation objectives within the 18-month evaluation timescale. This could limit the extent to which the findings can inform any transitional process. Unless current recruitment profiles can be increased or the evaluation timetable extended, it may be the case that the evaluation can only report the Pathfinder approaches that have been developed with only limited comment on their effectiveness, covering:
- The satisfaction and experience of families and young people that participate in the initial Pathfinder trials (i.e. that have completed single plans by the end of October 2012) but not fully capturing the experiences of families who go through later waves of planning (which may be a more typical experience as the new systems move towards steady state and the families become more uniformly typical of the population). The analysis would most likely be at an aggregate level, with insufficient numbers to comment on different sub-groups such as those experiencing different approaches or from different family backgrounds
 - Qualitative data collected from the case study research, involving Pathfinder teams, stakeholders and participating families and young people, covering the set-up and delivery stage

- Partial cost information, which is likely to be robust only around the set-up phase as opposed to the delivery of the new approaches to families (reflecting the limited throughput of families).

1: Introduction

- 1.1 This report is the fourth in a series of progress reports that will be produced throughout the course of the 18 month evaluation of the SEND Pathfinder programme. The first three reports - *The Evaluation Briefing Report Jan 2012*, and the *March and June 2012 Quarterly Evaluation Reports* – are available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/b0075291/green-paper/evaluation>.

The SEND Pathfinder Programme

- 1.2 The SEND Pathfinder programme is exploring how to effectively reform the statutory SEN assessment and statement framework, as a means of:
- Better supporting life outcomes for children and young people
 - Giving parents confidence by giving them more control
 - Transferring power to professionals on the front line and to local communities.
- 1.3 The Pathfinder programme involves the development and delivery of alternative approaches that could enhance or replace the existing system. Each Pathfinder was tasked to develop and trial an assessment process; a single, joined up 'Education, Health and Care Plan' (hereafter referred to as the single plan); and personal budgets across education, social care and health, and adult services as appropriate for children and young people from birth to 25 years. In addition, the programme is exploring how best to utilise and build the skill and resource of families and the voluntary and community sector (VCS), and the development of a local service offer.
- 1.4 Twenty Pathfinder sites¹, comprising of thirty-one local areas have been commissioned to run from October 2011 to March 2013. Each Pathfinder area has been grant funded to deliver local activities and is made up from the relevant local authorities, NHS agencies and a range of partners from the VCS, parent-carer groups, colleges and schools.

¹ The Bromley and Bexley consortium, Calderdale, the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly consortium, Devon, Gateshead, Greenwich, the Hartlepool and Darlington consortium, Hertfordshire, Lewisham, Manchester, the Northamptonshire and Leicester City consortium, North Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, the Oldham and Rochdale consortium, the SE7 consortium (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Medway, Surrey and West Sussex), Solihull, Southampton, Trafford, Wigan and Wiltshire.

SEN Direct Payments

1.5 The SEND Green Paper made a commitment to “*test how the scope of direct payments might be increased to include funding streams from education and health*”. New legislation² was introduced which allowed for pilot projects to be established in all SEND Pathfinder local authorities as well as in the five local authorities that had previously participated in the Individual Budgets (IBs) for Families with Disabled Children pilot but were not part of the wider SEND Pathfinder. Direct payments can be piloted for education services that are covered by:

- The special education provision specified in a SEN statement
- Provision identified in a Section 139A Learning and Skills Act 2000 Assessment
- Transport (or anything else that may be subject to arrangements under specified sections of the 1996 Education Act).

The report

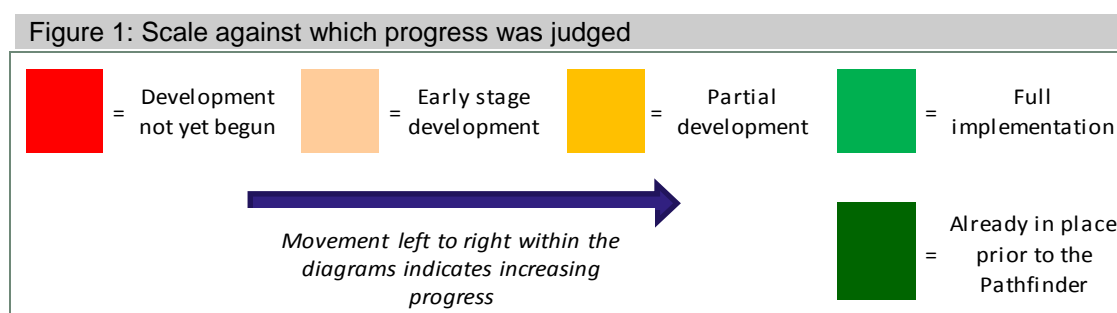
1.6 This report presents:

- Commentary and analysis on the second set of monitoring returns received from all Pathfinder areas, which detailed self-reported progress from April to June 2012 (i.e. Quarter 1 of 2012/13)
- Supporting commentary and analysis on the progress made by the ten in-depth case study areas, each of which participated in a second-round case study visit over the course of June-July 2012
- An update on the number of families recruited by sites by mid-August 2012
- Feedback on the activities undertaken by the Pathfinder Support Team reported through the monitoring returns for Quarter 1 of 2012/13 and the case study research
- The progress being made in the development of Special Educational Needs Direct Payments (SEN DPs)
- An update on the progress made by and next steps of the evaluation team.

² The Special Educational Needs (Direct Payments) (Pilot Scheme) Order 2012

Self-reported progress

- 1.7 The Common Delivery Framework (CDF) was developed to enable structured data collection about the delivery and costs at different stages of the Pathfinder process. It sets out a series of themes and elements which it was anticipated each Pathfinder would need to address as part of developing its local activity (see Annex A). Progress has been and will be tracked on a quarterly basis through the area level monitoring submissions. It is for each area to judge its own progress.
- 1.8 Analysis of the submissions made for Quarter 1 of 2012/13 is detailed within this report under the four themes of the CDF: Organisational engagement and cultural change (Chapter 2); Engaging and involving families (Chapter 3); Setting up the infrastructure (Chapter 4); and Safeguarding and risk management (Chapter 4). Progress was judged on a scale from 'not yet begun' through to 'full implementation' and is illustrated throughout the report using the colour coding shown in Figure 1.



Source: SQW

- 1.9 Each Pathfinder area that received DfE SEND Pathfinder grant funding completed a monitoring submission. The data analysis is based on 29 area monitoring responses from the 31 Pathfinder local authorities as: one consortium of two local authorities received a single grant; and another consortium of two authorities pooled their grant funding and thus completed a single monitoring submission. The other consortia have supplied individual returns, which allows of a more detailed analysis across the programme.

Work undertaken by the evaluation team

- 1.10 Table 1 provides a description of the research that has been undertaken between June and August 2012. It details both the research that forms the basis of this report, and on-going survey work with parents and carers, and staff that will be covered in later reports. Full details of our approach are contained in Annex A.

Research Method

Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Received complete set of monitoring submissions from all Pathfinder areas at the beginning of July 2012, which reported progress made between April and June 2012• Reviewed the monitoring submissions and undertook a verification exercise with several areas in cases where data anomalies had been identified• Finalised the dataset and undertook an analysis of the data
Parent-carer survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-going parent-carer telephone interviews
Case study research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-going discussion and negotiation with case study areas to support and monitor their recruitment of both Pathfinder and Comparator families and young people to take part in the evaluation• Second round case study visits to each of the ten case study areas. Case studies have involved an average of 10 semi-structured, usually face to face interviews with staff and stakeholders (including parents) involved in the development of the Pathfinder in each of 10 case study areas• Initial development of research tools to undertake qualitative family-based case studies
Staff work and satisfaction survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rolling collection of staff contact details from across the Pathfinder areas• Dissemination of the online baseline staff work and satisfaction survey to staff identified within the period

1.11 The SEND Pathfinder evaluation was extended to include the SEN DP pilot projects. The aim of this additional research element is to improve the evidence base in relation to:

- The level of demand from families for SEN Direct Payments
- The practicalities of introducing SEN Direct Payments
- The implications for wider provision.

1.12 The methodology builds on the existing Pathfinder evaluation approach. The existing research tools for the SEND Pathfinder evaluation have been extended to allow additional data to be collected that relates specifically to SEN DPs. In addition, following a scoping, exercise 14 case studies areas were identified covering four of the existing SEND Pathfinder local authority case study areas, five SEND Pathfinder areas that are not case studies for the wider Pathfinder evaluation and the five SEN DP only areas (i.e. the former IB pilot areas).

Structure of the report

1.13 The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2: Progress developing organisational engagement and cultural change
- Chapter 3: Progress engaging and involving families
- Chapter 4: Progress setting up the Pathfinder infrastructure
- Chapter 5: Feedback on the Pathfinder Support Team
- Chapter 6: SEN Direct Payments
- Chapter 7: Conclusions and implications
- Annex A – Our approach to the Pathfinder evaluation
- Annex B – SEN DP Pilot evaluation approach.

2: Progress developing organisational engagement and cultural change

- 2.1 The effective delivery of the Pathfinder approaches will be dependent on the engagement and commitment of a number of stakeholders in each area, including strategic and operational staff, families and the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Moreover, areas will need to consider how to build the skills and capacity of this group of stakeholders, and ensure that adequate resource is provided to communicate and deliver the required cultural change.
- 2.2 This Chapter presents the self-assessed progress of Pathfinder areas by June 2012 against the four elements which make up the *organisational engagement and cultural change* theme of the CDF:
- Engagement of relevant stakeholders
 - Recruitment of designated staff
 - Change management
 - Market development and the local offer.
- 2.3 This analysis is supplemented by findings and examples from the second round of case study visits.

Organisational engagement and cultural change

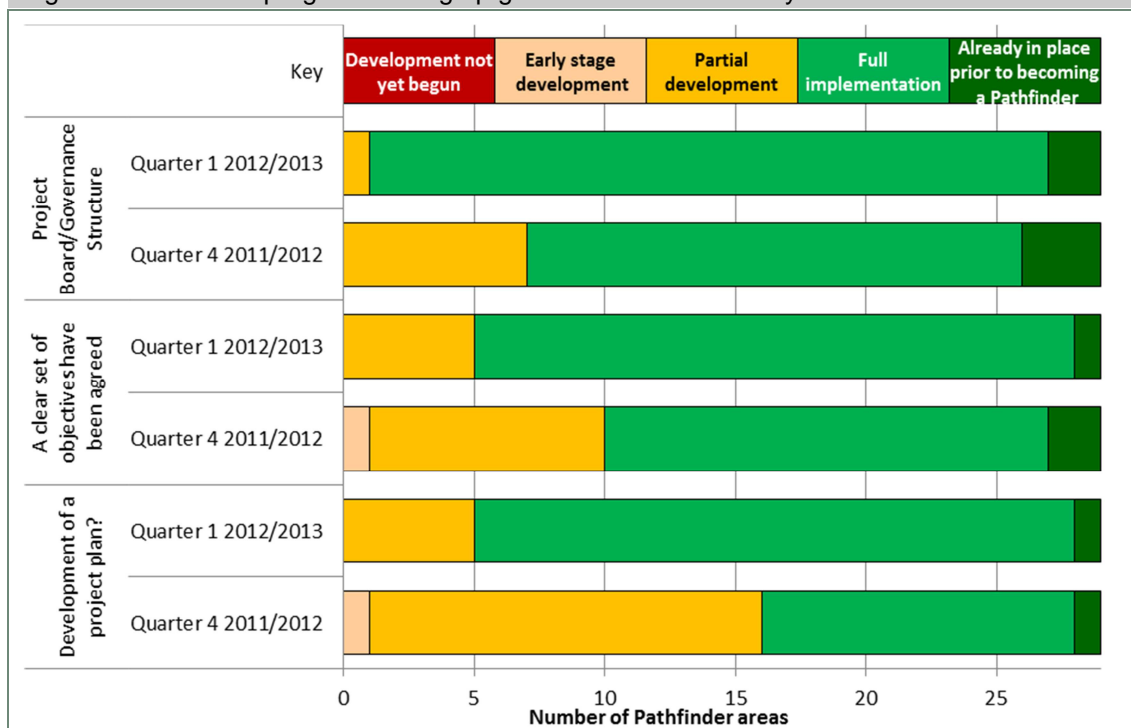
Setting up Pathfinder governance structures

- 2.4 By June 2012, the governance structures were fully in place for most Pathfinder areas. Progress appeared to have been made in agreeing objectives and project plans. Only one area reported that their board or governance structure was not yet fully in place (compared to seven areas in the previous quarter) and an increased majority (24 compared to 19) felt that a clear set of objectives had been fully agreed³ by June 2012 (Figure 2). The number of areas to have a fully developed project plan had also increased substantially; with 24 areas having fully developed their project

³ They had either rated themselves at 'full implementation' or said this was 'already in place prior to becoming a Pathfinder'

plan by the end of June 2012 - nearly double the number that had fully developed project plans by March 2012 (13 areas).

Figure 2: Pathfinder progress setting up governance structures by end of June 2012



Note: Quarter 1 2012/13 figures provide the most recent picture of areas' self-assessed position (by the end of June 2012). Figures for the end of Quarter 4 2011/12 are also reported to illustrate progress.

N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 2.5 The case studies were each seeking to achieve a similar set of objectives, the majority of which related to addressing deficiencies in existing working practices and associated systems. It was also evident that all of the areas hoped that a number of weaknesses would be addressed by a combination of: the development of an outcome-focused single plan; movement towards more family centred approaches; improved multi-agency working; and introduction of key working (see Table 1).

Table 1: Elements of the existing system wish to change through the Pathfinder

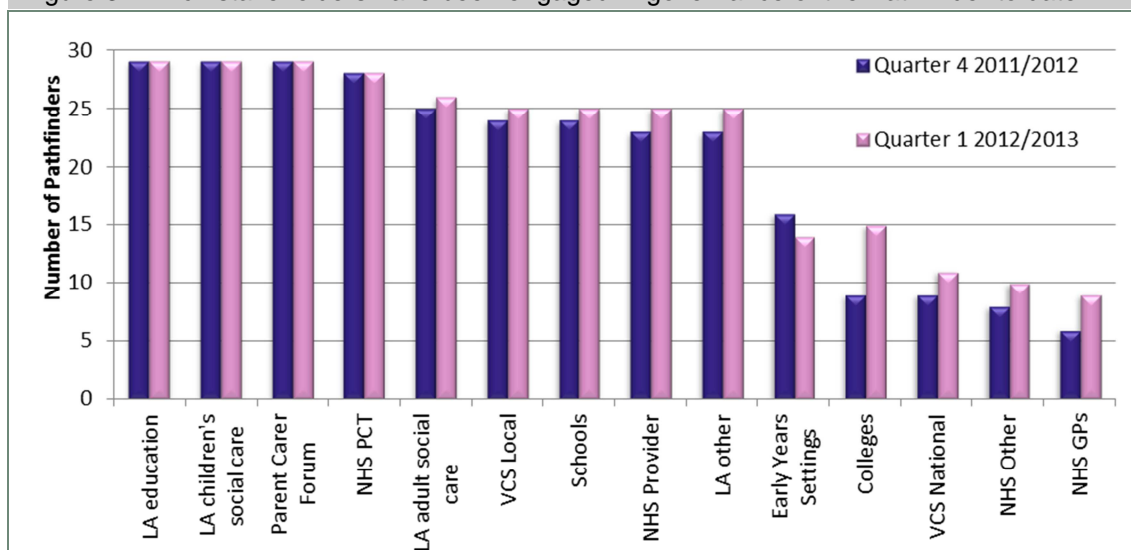
Weakness wish to address	Development of an outcomes focused single plan	Movement towards more family centred approaches	Introduction of key working	Improved multi agency working
Lack of independence, and choice and control for families and young people	✓	✓		
Lack of join-up across services for families and young people	✓	✓	✓	✓
Low parental confidence	✓	✓	✓	

Weakness wish to address	Development of an outcomes focused single plan	Movement towards more family centred approaches	Introduction of key working	Improved multi agency working
Short term planning and lack of integration across the age ranges	✓		✓	✓
Lack of multi-agency working and poor use of existing resources	✓		✓	✓
Lack of accountability across agencies to jointly deliver support packages	✓			✓

Source: SQW case study research

- 2.6 There appeared to have been good levels of strategic involvement in Pathfinder governance structures from across most parties by June 2012 (Figure 3). A common group of stakeholders continued to be prominent in the governance of most Pathfinders including: professionals from Local Authority education and children’s services, and Parent Carer Forums/representatives (engaged in governance across all 29 areas), health (28 areas), adult care (26), schools (25) and the local VCS (25). Two thirds of the areas (19) had engaged each of the stakeholders within this common group.
- 2.7 Other stakeholders continued to be less commonly engaged in the governance of Pathfinder. However, there was a marked increase in the engagement of colleges between March and June 2012 (from 9 areas to 15), implying that more areas were considering how to incorporate post-16 education provision within their new approaches. This was encouraging given several comments made during the case study visits about education providers (including both schools and colleges) proving challenging to engage given their current focus on the funding reforms as opposed to the Pathfinder.

Figure 3: Which stakeholders have been engaged in governance of the Pathfinder to date?



N=29 responses

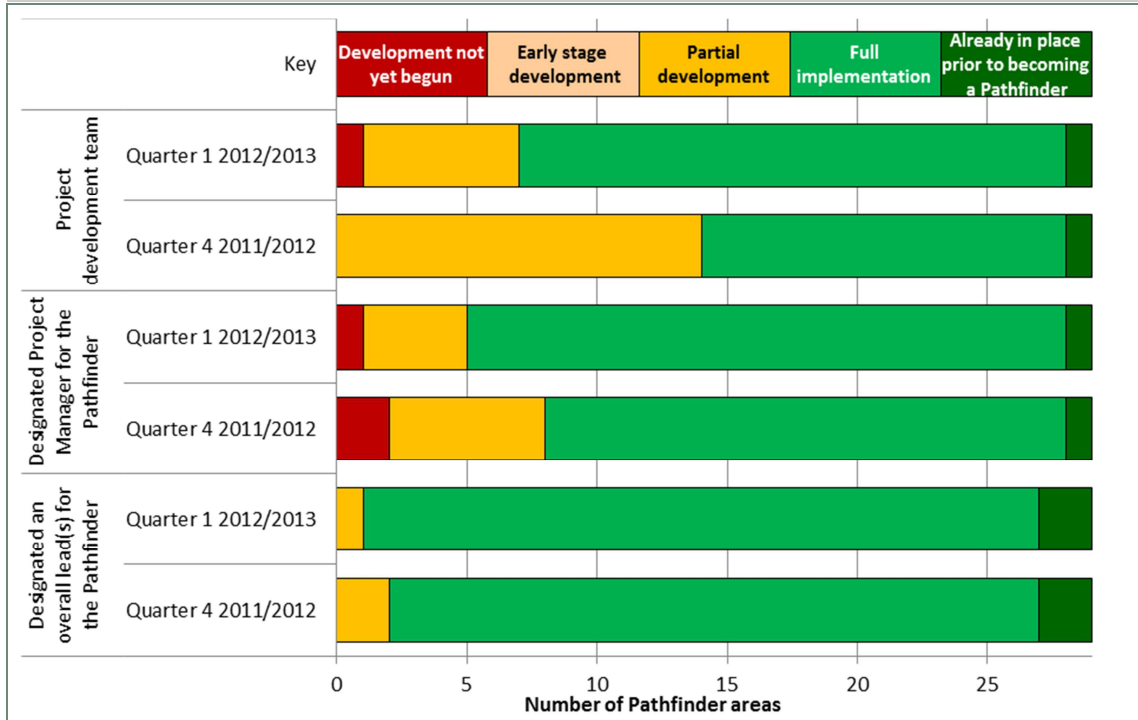
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 2.8 Although engagement in Pathfinder Governance structures had generally been good, the case studies highlighted an on-going capacity issue with health colleagues, which was confirmed by both non-health and health professionals. They commented that health professionals had struggled to balance the demands of the Pathfinder and their core health work, which had been exacerbated by a lack of explicit guidance on SEND and the Pathfinder from the Department of Health. One area added that it would have been helpful for the NHS Operating Plan to make reference to the Pathfinder, as this governed the ways in which most health professionals prioritised their time.

Recruitment of staff

- 2.9 By June 2012 most areas had a designated Lead, a Project Manager and a project development team in place to support the delivery of the Pathfinder (F). Evidence from the case studies illustrated the importance of both the Lead and Project Manager role, which had been vital in driving forward and coordinating activity at the local level and maintaining regular communications between different stakeholders. It also appeared that areas had made more progress in instances where the Project Manager worked full time on Pathfinder activities and where they had been sufficiently supported by the Pathfinder Lead to address any challenges that had arisen.

Figure 4: Area progress recruiting designated staff by end of June 2012

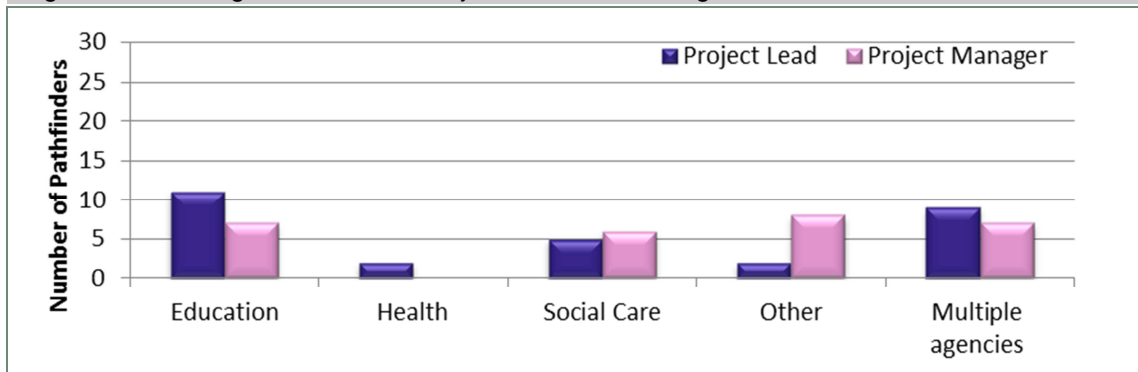


N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 2.10 The individuals leading the Pathfinders most commonly came from an education background, in recognition that much of the programme focused around education and SEN (Figure 5). Indeed, 11 Project Leads came from education alone, while a further 8 Leads came from a multi-agency background which included education in addition to health and/or social care.
- 2.11 Project managers tended to be sourced from a wider variety of backgrounds, including education, social care and non-service specific backgrounds including corporate services and in one case, a parent/carer forum.

Figure 5: Which agencies are the Project Lead and Manager from?



N=29 responses for Project Lead, N=28 responses for Project Manager

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 2.12 In addition to having Project Managers and Leads in post, Quarter 1 2012/13 saw substantial increases in the numbers of areas that judged themselves to have full project development teams in post. By June 2012 22 areas had fully recruited their project development team, compared to 15 at the end of March.
- 2.13 Project development teams most commonly comprised of: education practitioners (across 28 of the 29 Pathfinder areas), health commissioners (27 areas), social care practitioners (27) and parent/carers (27). As a result of internal capacity issues, a number of the case study areas had also commissioned specialist external consultants to support specific elements of their delivery. This most commonly included work to support the engagement and recruitment of families, and the development and delivery of staff training.
- 2.14 The areas that had project development teams fully in place were more likely to report more progress: developing the infrastructure required to deliver the Pathfinder; developing and delivering change management processes; and raising awareness and recruiting families and young people to take part in the Pathfinder. This shows the importance of having dedicated resources in place.
- 2.15 Development of the Pathfinder was being taken forward through project workstreams/working groups in nine out of the ten case study areas. Individual workstreams drew upon the expertise of a varied group of individuals, which included local authority staff, education providers, parent/carers and the VCS. However, it was evident that whilst some groups worked well and had made progress, others had either been more of a 'talking shop' or had not met regularly and therefore still lacked clear objectives nine months into the Programme. Two areas also voiced their concerns about a growing risk that each of their workstreams would produce stand-alone outputs that would not be easy to align. These areas acknowledged that this was likely to have been the result of a lack of prioritisation and time on the part of the Pathfinder Leads, who were undertaking the role in addition to their day-to-day job
- 2.16 Representation from health on project working groups was reported to be considerably less than expected / hoped in around half of the case study areas. However, one of the case study areas reported high and growing levels of engagement from health on their Pathfinder workstreams. This engagement had been the result of the area holding a health specific Pathfinder event to introduce the Programme and potential implications for health colleagues, which was well attended and resulted in several individuals volunteering to sit on the working groups. This

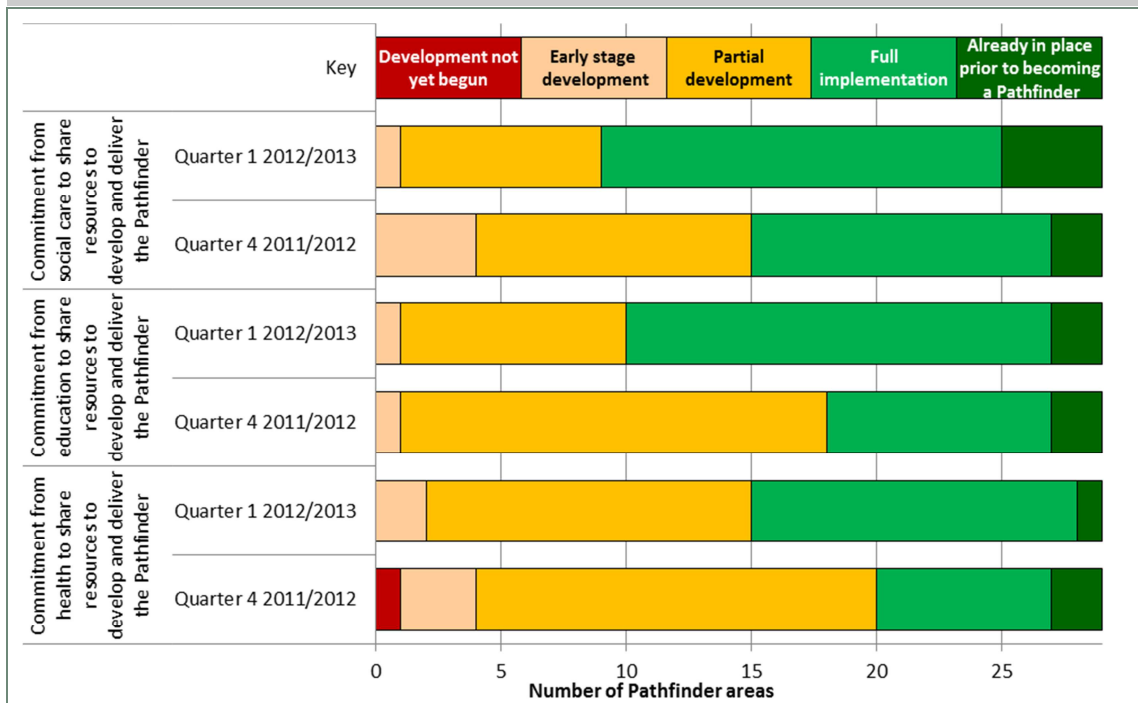
implies that the delivery of service-specific events may help to increase engagement in the Pathfinder.

Commitment to share resources

2.17 The number of areas judging themselves to have fully established commitment to share resources within health, social care and education increased substantially between March and June 2012 (Figure 6). Indeed by June:

- Two thirds of the areas (20) had fully secured commitment from social care to share resources to develop and deliver the Pathfinder (compared to 14 who had secured commitment in the previous quarter)
- The number of areas that had fully secured commitment from education to develop and deliver the Pathfinder had nearly doubled (19 compared to 11 in the previous quarter)
- 14 areas had fully secured commitment from health to share resources to develop and deliver the Pathfinder (compared to 9 in the previous quarter).

Figure 6: Area progress gaining commitment to share resources to develop and deliver the



N=29 responses

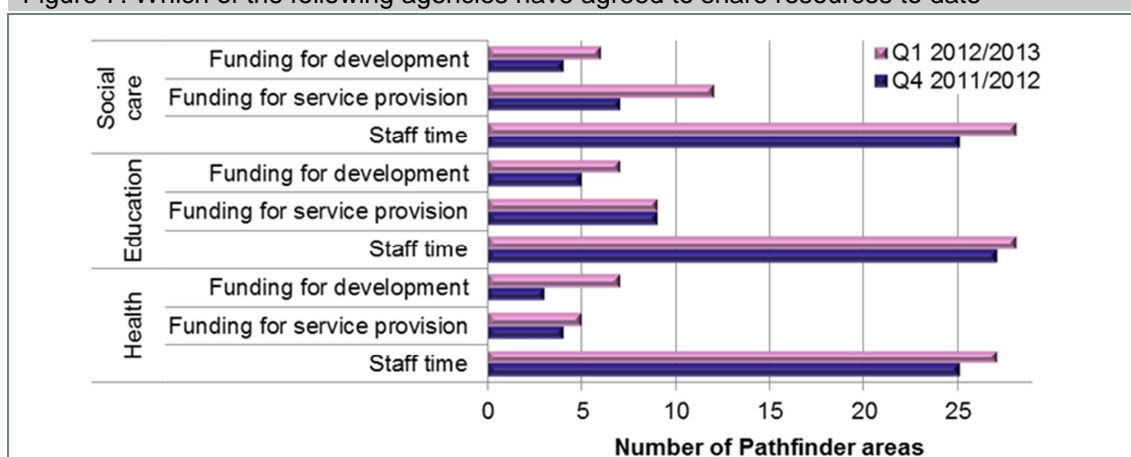
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

2.18 It was evident that partners were more willing to commit staff time to support the development of the Pathfinder relative to funding for either development or service

provision (Figure 7). Of the areas that had secured funding for development and service provision, 8 areas had secured funding for more than one agency for development and 11 areas had secured funding from more than one agency for service provision. However, generally areas were more likely to have successfully leveraged funding from the service background of their Project Lead. This was particularly true within social care where 8 of the 12 areas with a social care Lead had successfully leveraged funding for packages (compared to 4 of the 17 who didn't have a social care Lead).

2.19 Although non-grant funded development resource is unlikely to be a high priority for the Pathfinders during the funded Programme, it will be important for areas to consider how they will sustain and scale up their activities post this period. The case studies illustrated that some of the areas did not feel they needed to gain further commitment to fund service provision, as they planned to rely almost entirely on rolling forward the existing resource that had previously been committed to each individual child in the traditional system.

Figure 7: Which of the following agencies have agreed to share resources to date



Social care N=28 responses, Education N=28 responses, Health N=27 responses
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Engagement of parent/carers, children/young people and the VCS

2.20 Engagement of parent/carers in the planning and development of the Pathfinders had substantially increased between March and June 2012 (Figure 8), with eight more areas having reached 'full implementation': 23 areas had reached full implementation compared to 15 in the previous quarter. Parent-carer engagement was reported by some of the case studies to have led to the co-production of Pathfinder materials, such as a draft assessment and single plan pathway and template, and family information flyers. These case study areas added that co-produced materials had

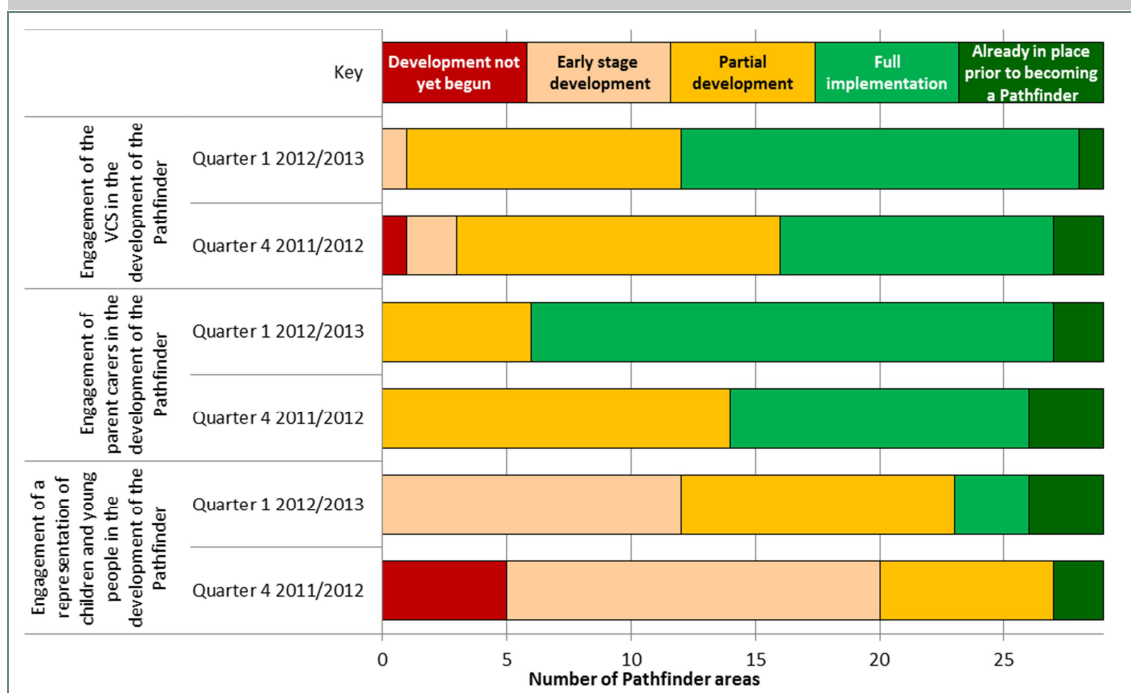
been easier to market to potential families than comparative information that had been developed by only professionals for other Programmes, thereby illustrating the added value of involving parent/carers.

- 2.21 On a less positive note, although parent/carers consulted through the case study research valued their involvement in the Pathfinder, a small number voiced their concerns about the time commitment involved which was difficult to balance with caring responsibilities. They added that it had often been difficult to keep up with the numerous decisions that were being made and felt that more feedback should be provided to help them understand what had been decided and how this would influence subsequent activities. It was also apparent that some areas had involved their parent/carers in all/or the majority of major Pathfinder developments, whereas others had kept them at arms-length during the development stage as they wanted to have a draft pathway/template to discuss prior to fully involving them.
- 2.22 Although all areas had begun to consider how to engage a representation of children and young people to support the development of the Pathfinder, only 6 areas reported full engagement and 12 out of 29 areas had only reached the early stage development stage. It would therefore appear that children and young people were unlikely to have much of an influence on the initial approaches that are being trialled through the Pathfinders. However, evidence from the case studies suggested that the views of children and young people that participate in the Pathfinder would be canvassed and fed into subsequent iterations of the developing materials and approaches.
- 2.23 The case studies also highlighted a small number of examples to illustrate how young people in particular could be engaged to support the development of the Pathfinder. These included:
- One area that was planning on recruiting two young people to sit on their post 16 workstream to help develop a more appropriate approach to transition
 - Another area which had arranged a group of young people to gather feedback from those young people who go through the Pathfinder process.
- 2.24 Although most case study areas had VCS representation on their Boards or working groups, many stakeholders (including members of the VCS) remained unclear about what role or purpose the VCS should have in the delivery of the Pathfinder. Suggested roles included family advocates, key workers and service providers, which would need to be considered at the level of an individual organisation to avoid any

conflict of interest between coordination of the new pathway and provision of subsequent services. Uncertainty around whether to pursue any of these suggestions had limited the extent to which they had been involved to date and may lead to peripheral involvement over the course of the Programme in the absence of some timely decisions by the areas.

- 2.25 Of the case studies that felt they had effectively engaged and involved the VCS, one had commissioned the VCS to take on both an advocacy and support planning role, as they wanted to ensure the planning process was independent from the local authority. Another area had helped to deliver a regional event targeted at the VCS, which included speakers from the DfE, national VCS representatives and parent/carers and led to discussions on what the VCS could bring to the Pathfinder.

Figure 8: Pathfinder area progress engaging parent/carers, children/young people and the



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

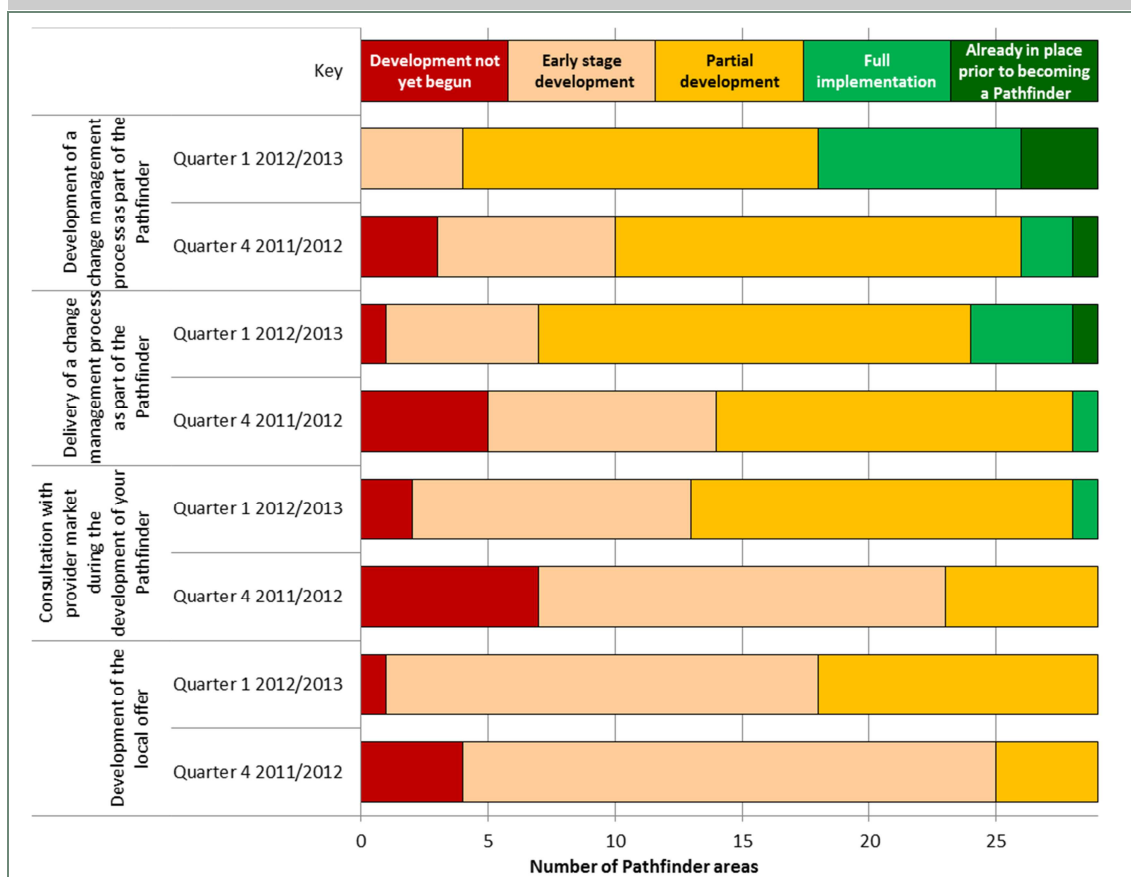
Change management, market development and the local offer

Change management

- 2.26 Development and delivery of change management processes is likely to provide a good reflection of the stage of progress of the Pathfinder areas. That is, areas will at a minimum need to ensure that professionals that have been identified to work with Pathfinder families are sufficiently prepared to deliver the new approaches. The data illustrated that the areas that had made more progress engaging and involving

families and young people in their local Pathfinder were more likely to have begun the development and subsequently the delivery of their change management processes. The overall position had improved from the previous quarter although the pace of progress still appears slow (Figure 9), which is likely to reflect the complex nature of the changes Pathfinder areas have been tasked to trial.

Figure 9: Pathfinder area progress developing change management, market development



N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

2.27 As discussed in the previous quarterly report, change management had been delivered through a mixture of formal and informal routes: where formal change management had involved organised workshops and training; and informal change management had involved staff supporting each other informally to learn new ways of working. Examples from the case study areas included:

- Introductory events for cross sections of professionals – which had been largely well attended and received. They had also highlighted engagement challenges with particular groups of professionals, which differed across the areas and appeared to depend on how relevant individuals felt the Pathfinder was to them. For example, one area had been unable to engage their

transition team, as they felt they were already working in the required person-centred way and therefore did not need to attend training events. Conversely, another area reported difficulties engaging their educational psychologists as they did not feel they needed to change their current working practices

- Key working training for staff/VCS detailing the new approach, family-centred planning and how to effectively support families – where particular mention was given to parent involvement in the delivery of the training which was felt to have added to the success of the relevant sessions and illustrated the importance of bringing families and professionals together to create a shared understanding
- Development of e-learning materials to provide an introduction to all managers and frontline professionals who may have some involvement in the integrated assessment and single planning process
- Provision of an introduction to the workings of health and social care colleagues for school based staff who will be acting as key workers, to help them understand how to undertake a holistic approach
- Light bite sessions with professionals and families (which would be run after key working training) to discuss their experiences/progress/issues as they progress through the new approach, to help inform the thinking of the Pathfinder.

2.28 It is likely that further recruitment of families onto Pathfinders during the Autumn academic term will add further impetus to change management processes. We would therefore expect most areas to reach full implementation over the course of quarter 2 of 2012/13. Similarly, it is likely that most areas will begin with top-down change management processes that seek to inform professionals, which will later be supplemented by more reflective practices that feed into the on-going development of the new materials and approaches.

Market development and the local offer

2.29 Although some progress had been made by areas, consultation with providers and development of the local offer remained at a relatively early stage of development. Only one area had fully consulted their provider market and none had finished developing their local offer by June 2012.

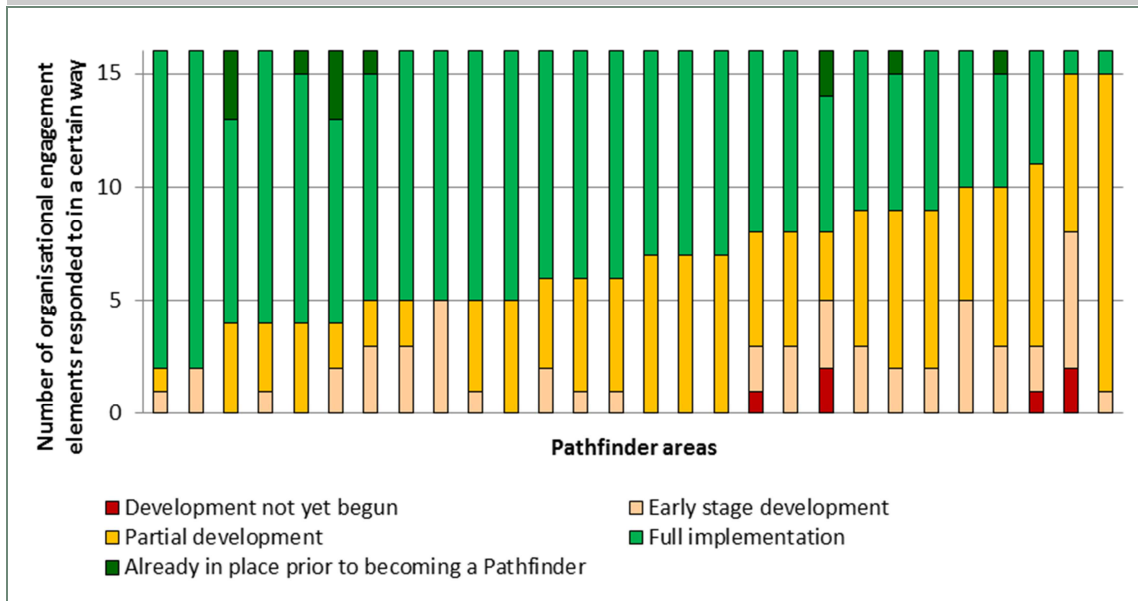
- 2.30 The case studies illustrated the high expectations that parent/carers had of the local offer, as a number of those consulted felt it would help them to understand what could be accessed and from where. However, development of the local offer had only just begun in the majority of the areas, most of which remained unclear about the coverage and format of their offer and would welcome some guidance from the DfE.
- 2.31 Developments in the more advanced cases continued to imply areas either intended to develop a broad brush strategic offer to families which set out their multi-agency intentions or a provider based directory. In the latter case, developments had tended to be two-pronged:
- Social care - on the one hand areas were considering how to build on their Short Breaks core offer, existing service directories and the legacy of the Aiming High for Disabled Children's Programme
 - Education – this was perceived to be the most challenging element of the local offer to develop and therefore areas had spent time considering how to approach this and how to engage their education providers. In two cases, areas had also committed dedicated resource (including an external consultant and local authority time) to broker relationships with schools/colleges and support them to contribute to the local offer.
- 2.32 Limited discussion had taken place on how to develop the health element of the local offer, as it appeared to be less of a priority and was associated with less development support/capacity. Little consideration had also been given to bringing together all the individual agency based elements of the local offer to illustrate how services would work together. Therefore, it would appear that development to date was being undertaken in service-based silo and was likely to be an iterative and longer term process that would not be completed within the lifetime of the Pathfinder Programme. In addition, areas voiced their concerns about how to keep the offer up to date over the longer term, which in some cases appeared to have slowed down their development of the local offer.

Variations in self assessed progress across Pathfinder areas

- 2.33 Figure 10 provides an illustration of the perceived progress made by each of the Pathfinder areas (each column represents a single area's responses) against each of the 16 progress measures contained in the organisational engagement and cultural change theme. This highlights the range of self-assessed progress; with two areas

perceiving themselves to be fully delivering against 14 of the 16 progress measures, while two others only judged themselves to be fully delivering against one of them. This implies that although the majority of areas had completed their set-up phase nine months into the Programme, two areas (i.e. those areas at the right hand side of the diagram) remained at an embryonic stage, which poses major cause for concern.

Figure 10: Responses to the series of monitoring questions on organisational engagement



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 2.34 Table 2 presents the overarching progress between Quarter 4 2011/12 and Quarter 1 2012/13. While 13 areas were still in the early stages of developing (or had not yet begun) a third of their progress measures by the end of March, only four areas were at this stage by June 2012. At the other end of the scale, while one area had rated two thirds of their progress measures at full implementation (or already in place prior to the Pathfinder) by March 2012, this number had increased to 12 areas by June 2012. This is an encouraging improvement, but still represents under half of the areas.

Table 2: Breakdown of responses to CDF element questions		
	Number of areas	
	Quarter 4 2011/12	Quarter 1 2012/13
A third of organisational engagement and cultural change indicators at...		
...development not yet begun/early stage development	13 (45%)	4 areas (14%)
Two thirds of organisational engagement and cultural change indicators at...		
... full implementation/already in place prior to Pathfinder	1 area (3%)	12 areas (41%)

N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Summary

2.35 Table 3 presents a summary of the progress made against the engaging and involving families theme of the CDF by the end of June 2012.

Table 3: Summary of progress made against the organisational engagement and cultural change theme

- Nearly all Pathfinder areas had successfully set up governance structures and delivery teams, and had developed a set of local objectives for their Pathfinder, which is encouraging. However, a couple remained at an embryonic stage
- There appeared to have been broad strategic involvement in Pathfinder governance structures from across most parties by June 2012. A common group of stakeholders continued to be prominent in the governance of most Pathfinders including: professionals from Local Authority education and children's services, and Parent Carer Forums/representatives, health, adult care, schools and the local VCS. However, the scale and quality of representation from health remained an issue caused by lack of capacity to support developments on the part of the health professionals involved
- Areas that had project development teams in place were more likely to have made more progress: developing the infrastructure required to deliver the Pathfinder; developing and delivering change management processes; and raising awareness and recruiting families and young people to take part in the Pathfinder. Case study evidence illustrated the importance of both the Pathfinder Lead and Manager roles, which had been vital in driving forward and coordinating activity at the local level and maintaining regular communications between different stakeholders – more advanced areas also exhibited a close working relationship between the two roles
- Engagement of children and young people in the development of the Pathfinder had also been very limited to date, which was likely to mean they would have limited influence on the initial approaches being trialled
- Although most areas had engaged the VCS at a strategic level, evidence from the case studies illustrated a number of areas were uncertain about the purpose and role that they could play in delivering elements of the Pathfinder, which had led to limited involvement on the part of the VCS to date
- The majority of services had committed at least some staff time to support Pathfinder development. Services appeared to be more willing to commit staff time to support the development of the Pathfinder, as opposed to money for development or service provision (for the single plans)
- Most areas had begun to develop their change management processes and some had subsequently progressed to delivering these. However, the pace of progress appeared slow, which is likely to reflect the complex nature of the changes Pathfinder areas have been tasked to trial
- Limited progress had been made in relation to development of the local offer.

3: Progress engaging and involving families and young people

- 3.1 As part of the Pathfinder, areas will need to raise awareness of the programme and communicate the opportunity to participate to prospective families. Then, once families are recruited, areas will need to offer some form of support to their participating families. This may include the VCS providing individual or group support to participating families to help build their confidence and skills, and/or families providing advice to each other as they progress through the relevant assessment and single plan pathway.
- 3.2 This Chapter of the report presents progress made by all Pathfinder areas against the two elements which make up the *engaging and involving* theme of the CDF:
- Awareness raising with families
 - Peer support.
- 3.3 This analysis is supplemented by findings and examples from the second round of case study visits.

Awareness raising with families and young people

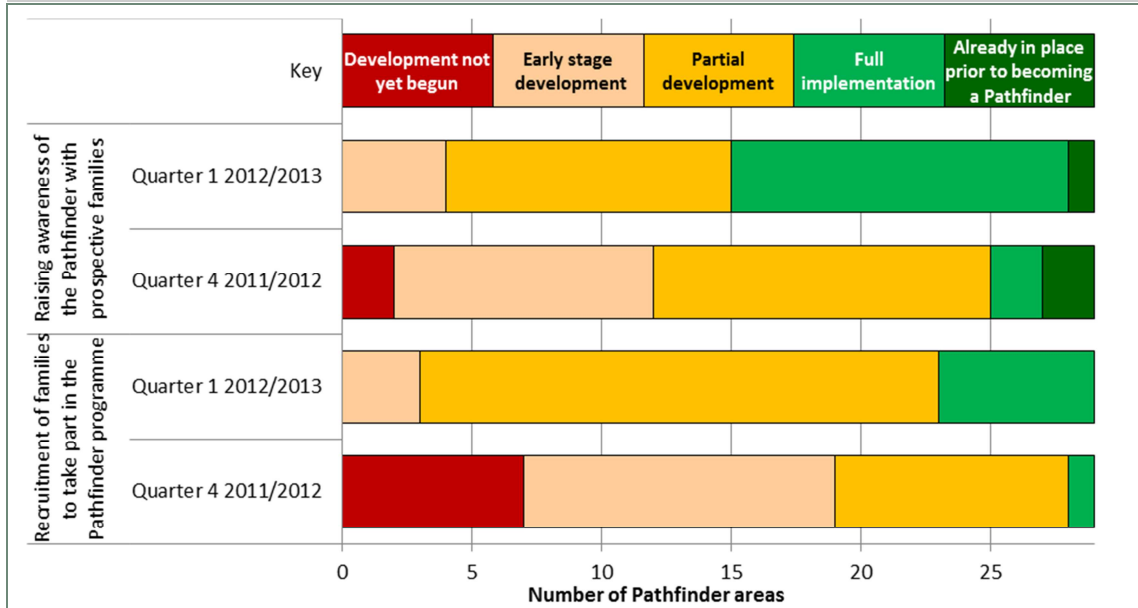
- 3.4 By June 2012, all areas had begun to raise awareness of the Pathfinder with prospective families and young people and half (14 areas) had reached full implementation (following a big increase from the previous quarter see Figure 11). Awareness raising had been undertaken in a number of ways, which included:
- Distribution of flyers and printed information to prospective families and young people
 - Delivery of introductory events, which had largely taken place in schools
 - Targeted introductions with families and young people that had been selected by professionals as those that may benefit from and were likely to take part in the Pathfinder.
- 3.5 The case studies illustrated that events and targeted introductions, which had enabled discussion about the Pathfinder, had provoked a more tangible response. However, they added that printed information had also been useful, as it had enabled

them to introduce the Pathfinder to a wider number of families and young people than those that were able to attend events. This implies areas may need to consider a combination of approaches to ensure information is accessible to all relevant families and young people.

- 3.6 Evidence from the case studies also illustrated that in a number of cases, parent partnerships and forums had effectively led or supported awareness raising activities through both their formal/informal networks and the delivery of introductory events. Feedback from parent/carers on some of the events showed they had particularly valued input from parent/carer champions, who were able to describe their own experiences, which often included the use of a personal budget or involvement in personalised approaches. However, they also raised some concerns around the events raising the expectations of a lot of parent/carers, which placed a large responsibility on the Pathfinder areas to deliver against their commitments. Similar initial concerns were raised at the outset of the Individual Budget Pilot Programme, which were addressed through on-going communication with families and openness on the part of the pilot staff about the exploratory nature of the activities.⁴
- 3.7 Recruitment of families and young people who will go through the Pathfinder process and receive a Single Plan had increased, with the majority of areas reporting they were part way through their recruitment process by the end of June 2012.
- 3.8 The areas that had made more progress raising awareness with families and young people, were more likely to have reported making more progress in relation to recruitment of this group to take part in their local Pathfinder. The data also showed that those areas that were more advanced in relation to the development of their assessment and single plan pathway had generally more progress raising awareness and recruiting families and young people - implying areas were waiting until they had developed their local approach before fully engaging families and young people.

⁴ Prabhakar, Thom and Johnson (2011) Individual budgets for families with disabled children
Final evaluation report: The IB process, DfE

Figure 11: Pathfinder progress of awareness raising with families by end of June 2012



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Recruitment to date

- 3.9 By mid-August⁵ 313 families and young people had been recorded on the monitoring tools as being recruited⁶ from across 20 Pathfinder areas, in addition to 60 comparator families⁷ (Table 5). Recruitment ramped up in advance of the school holidays (Figure 12) and is expected to plateau over the summer holiday period, as around half of referrals to date had come through education professionals working within schools or the local authority. Recruitment should increase again following the summer.

⁵ Figures correct as of 13th August 2012. It may be that actual numbers are slightly higher due to a delay in logging families after they have signed up for the pilot.

⁶ Recruitment figures illustrate the families and young people that had consented to take part in the research and subsequently been entered onto the Pathfinder monitoring tool

⁷ A number of the Pathfinder areas are recruiting comparator families, who will go through the traditional assessment and planning pathway as Pathfinder families go through the new Pathfinder approach.

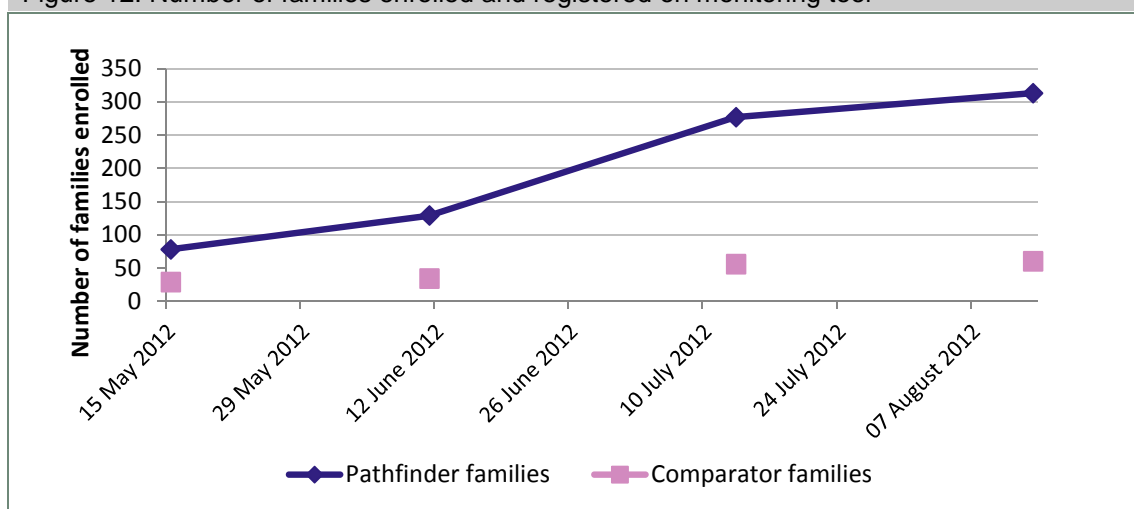
Table 5: Families recruited by 13th August 2012

	Number of families	Number of areas these families come from	Range of families per area
Pathfinder families and young people recruited	313	20	1 – 72
Comparator families recruited	60	6	1 – 21
Families that have left the Pathfinder ⁸	5	5	

Note: This includes families that had agreed to take part in the process and been registered in the monitoring tool by 13th August 2012.

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Figure 12: Number of families enrolled and registered on monitoring tool



Note: Lines used to connect the data points to illustrate the extent of the increase in recruitment within a given month.

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

3.10 Although the case studies as a collective were likely to recruit a mix of children and young people from across the 0-25 age range and spectrum of SEN, most had reduced their original recruitment intentions for varying reasons which included:

- Underestimating the resource required to undertake effective recruitment at the outset of the Pathfinder, which required more face to face discussions with families and young people than was originally anticipated
- Challenges getting sign up from some local authority based professionals and school-based staff to support the identification and engagement of families

⁸ By 13th August 2012, five of the Pathfinder families recruited had chosen to leave the Pathfinder. All five were from different areas, and there did not appear to be commonalities in reasons for deciding to no longer take part. The evaluation will track the number of families and young people choosing to leave the Pathfinder and seek to understand whether there are common reasons or points at which they are more likely to leave the Pathfinder.

- Revisions in the original target groups to accommodate changes in direction of the Pathfinder, which had come about as a result of either the publication of the DfE SEND Next Steps document or changes in senior leadership within the area.

3.11 Evidence from the case study areas also illustrated a bias towards the recruitment of families who had previously accessed services and in some cases families that were specifically unhappy with their existing package of support and therefore easier to identify. Several reasons were provided to support the decision to either limit or not recruit families who had not previously accessed services, which included:

- Lower levels of throughput of new families into the system
- A desire to work with the 'known' and 'familiar' and a feeling that working with new families would not necessarily offer the diversity of families one area was seeking to work with
- Identification and recruitment processes in some cases had led to the exclusion of new families as services and schools had been asked to identify families that they felt would benefit and be willing to participate in the Pathfinder, which relied on professionals already having established relationships with the relevant families
- Uncertainty about how long the Pathfinder process may take due to its developmental nature and a desire to respect current legislation and statutory requirements so as not to compromise families rights led some areas to focus on families who were not involved in statutory processes.

3.12 It is therefore likely that a large majority of the approaches that are developed will only be applicable to existing service users, which are different in nature to new families, and that the results may reflect the views of those families who are happier to engage in the Pathfinder. This may create issues further down the line when areas start to consider how to scale up their approaches to include a wider cohort of families, which are likely to include both new families and those that are more difficult to engage.

Nature of the Pathfinder families and young people

3.13 Table 6 details the characteristics of the children/young people recruited to take part in the Pathfinder by mid-August 2012. This presents a partial picture of recruitment,

as nine areas had not begun to recruit families and young people and several areas had not yet completed their recruitment process⁹.

- 3.14 It's important to note that by August 2012, the Pathfinder recruitment figures were less dominated by recruitment from one area than reported in June as other areas had recruited more families. However, almost one quarter of Pathfinder families continued to have been recruited from one area, implying that the other 19 areas had recruited an average of 10 families each to date.

Table 6: Characteristics of Pathfinder families recruited by 13th August 2012

		N	%
Age of child/young person	0-5 years	91	29%
	6-11 years	110	35%
	12-13 years	31	10%
	14-15 years	29	9%
	16-18 years	35	11%
	19+ years	17	5%
Formal education setting prior to Pathfinder	Mainstream schooling (including sixth form)	106	43%
	Special school	86	35%
	Early years	32	13%
	FE college or 6th form college	8	3%
	Not in an education setting	7	3%
	Academies	3	1%
	Hospital school	3	1%
	Work-based training	1	0%
	Not in education, employment or training	1	0%
Undisclosed at time of reporting	66	27%	
Looked after	Yes	11	4%
	No	206	66%
	Undisclosed at time of reporting	96	31%

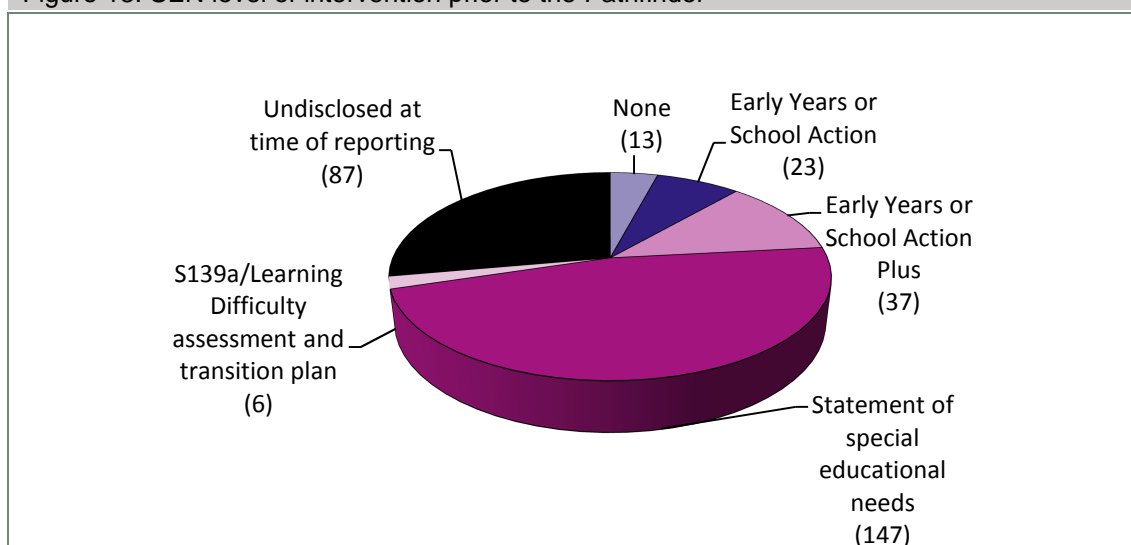
N=313 children/young people. Excludes comparator families.

Source: Pathfinder Monitoring Returns

⁹ In addition, information on a number of indicators relating to the family's position at the start of the Pathfinder had not been entered into the monitoring tool in all cases, as there was often a time delay between the relevant professionals passing on the information to the monitoring lead in each Pathfinder.

- 3.15 Children/young people were recruited onto the Pathfinder from across the age spectrum, with almost two thirds (64%) aged under 12.
- 3.16 Seventeen of the young people recruited (from across seven areas) were aged 19+. This cohort of young people will enable us to understand how those who had passed the traditional transition to adult social care services at 18 could benefit from the single 0-25 assessment process. The cohort remains comparatively small at present, but it is encouraging to see an increase in numbers recruited since June 2012 from this group.
- 3.17 Looking across the case studies, several of the areas intended to explore what could be achieved with the 19+ years group through distinct age-related and employment workstream activities, which would build on existing transition planning that had been undertaken. For example, one of the case study areas which had recruited several young people aged 19+ years, was seeking to use the Pathfinder to test whether they could use the Pathfinder opportunity to create a supported group living arrangement for four of this group. Another case study area intended to build on the Learning for Living and Work Framework to create a single transition plan for older young people, which was to include piloting a form of job brokerage to support college leavers into employment.
- 3.18 Almost half (47%) of children/young people recruited by mid-August 2012 had a statement of special educational needs, while around a quarter (23%) had lower level educational needs¹⁰.

Figure 13: SEN level of intervention prior to the Pathfinder

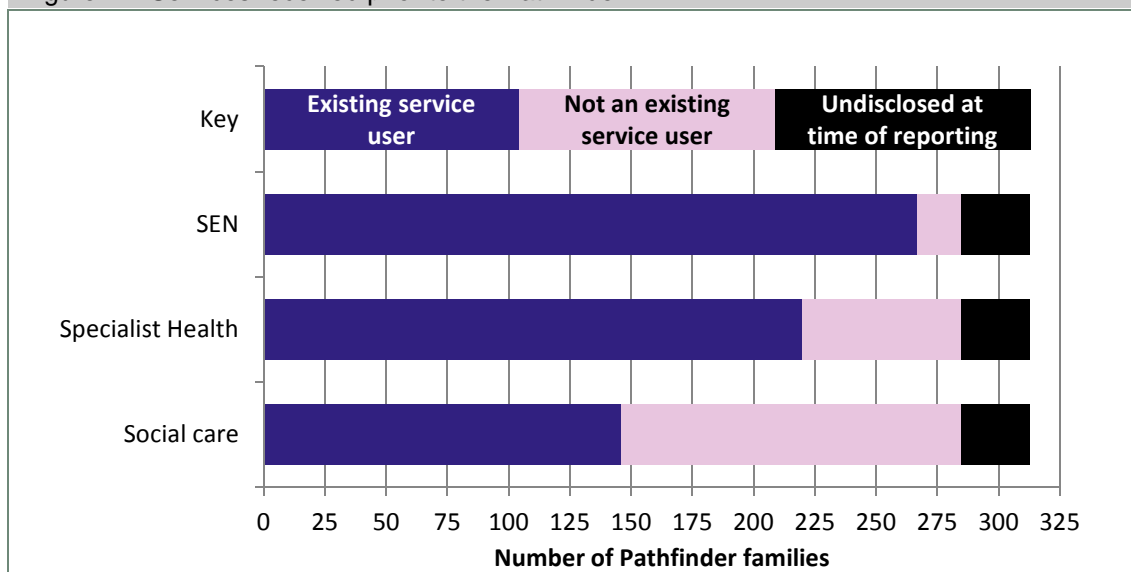


*N=313 children/young people. Excludes comparator families.
Source: Pathfinder Monitoring Returns*

¹⁰ This included children and young people whose needs were being met through Early Years and School Action/Action Plus and those with no identified SEN

3.19 Most families and young people recruited were existing SEN (85%¹¹) and health (70%) service users prior to Pathfinder – although less than half (47%) were known to have previously accessed social care services. This mirrored the intentions of the majority of the case study areas. Possible reasons include that these families could have been easier to reach because of their contact through social care, or it could be that these families and young people were targeted because the Pathfinder was deemed to be particularly helpful to them as a way of integrating their support across agencies.

Figure 14: Services received prior to the Pathfinder



N=313 children/young people. Excludes comparator and SEN DP only families.
Source: Pathfinder Monitoring Returns

Peer support

3.20 In terms of delivery of peer support to parent/carers, the impression from areas remained mixed, with the largest proportion of areas having reached partial development (12) (Figure 15). While this represents some improvement on the previous quarter, where the largest proportion of areas were still in the early stages of development, few areas (3) had reached full implementation or had this activity already in place prior to the Pathfinder.

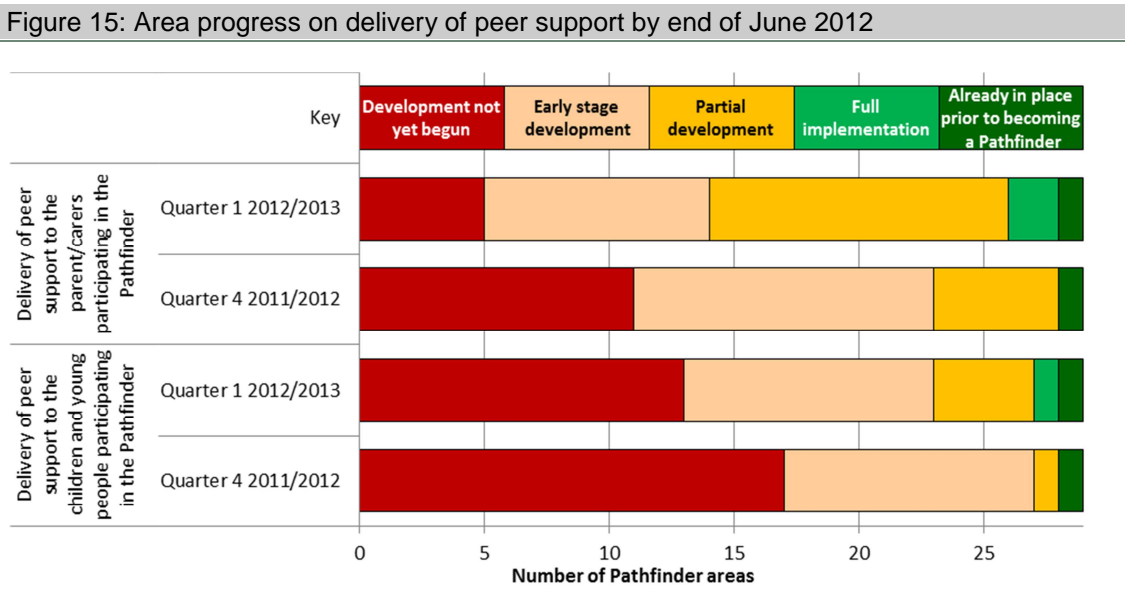
3.21 Delivery of peer support to children and young people was less developed relative to that for parent/carers, with only just over half (16 areas) of all areas having begun development.

¹¹ Please note that there is a discrepancy between the percentage of children and young people reported as being in receipt of SEN services prior to the Pathfinder (85%) and the level of SEN intervention prior to the Pathfinder (68%), which is caused by differences in the undisclosed data for both questions

3.22 Examples of how peer support was being taken forward in the case study areas included:

- Provision of support from the Parent Partnership or Forum to participating parent/carers as part of existing local authority contracts
- The recruitment of a set of young people from an established user group who will gather feedback from those young people that participate in the Pathfinder
- Virtual forums set up by the Pathfinder to provide internet-enabled families the opportunity to share their learning, experiences and concerns
- Families who are already accessing personal budgets were being asked by one area to act as champions and supporters of the new set of families – it was unclear whether this support would be provided on a voluntary basis or whether the support would be funded.

3.23 In general, we would expect delivery of peer support across areas to increase substantially over the coming quarter – as the majority of areas have now begun to recruit families and will need to ensure support is in place to meet their needs as they navigate the new process.



N= 29 responses
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Summary

3.24 Table 7 presents a summary of the progress made against the engaging and involving families theme of the CDF by the end of June 2012.

Table 7: Summary of progress made against the engaging and involving families theme

- Most areas were part way through their awareness raising activities by the end of June 2012, and as a consequence, most had begun to recruit families and young people to participate in their Pathfinder
- The areas that had made more progress raising awareness with families and young people, also reported making more progress in relation to recruitment of this group to take part in their local Pathfinder
- There appeared to be a bias towards the recruitment of families that were already accessing services, which we anticipate will continue and cause scalability issues over the longer term
- By mid-August 2012, 20 of the Pathfinder areas had registered on the monitoring tool that they had recruited a total of 313 families and young people (due to a lag between recruitment and registering it may be that the actual number is slightly higher) – this included one area that had recruited almost a quarter of the total Pathfinder families and young people, implying that the other 19 areas had recruited an average of only 10 families and young people to date
- Recruitment included a children and young people from across the 0-25 age range and spectrum of SEN, although recruitment of young people aged 19+ years was somewhat lower than other age groups
- The development of peer support remained in its infancy in many areas, but was expected to progress as families begun to go through the process.

4: Progress setting up the Pathfinder infrastructure

- 4.1 Each Pathfinder has been tasked with developing and delivering a new multi-agency assessment and single planning approach, which brings together the range of support for children, young people and their parents/carers and families. The *setting up the infrastructure* theme of the CDF covers four elements, each of which will contribute to this process:
- Mapping of the single assessment and plan pathway
 - Development of personal budgets
 - Coordination and delivery of the Pathfinder approach
 - Development of IT resources.
- 4.2 This Chapter provides an account of the progress made against this theme and subsequently summarises progress made against the final theme of the CDF – *safeguarding and risk management*.

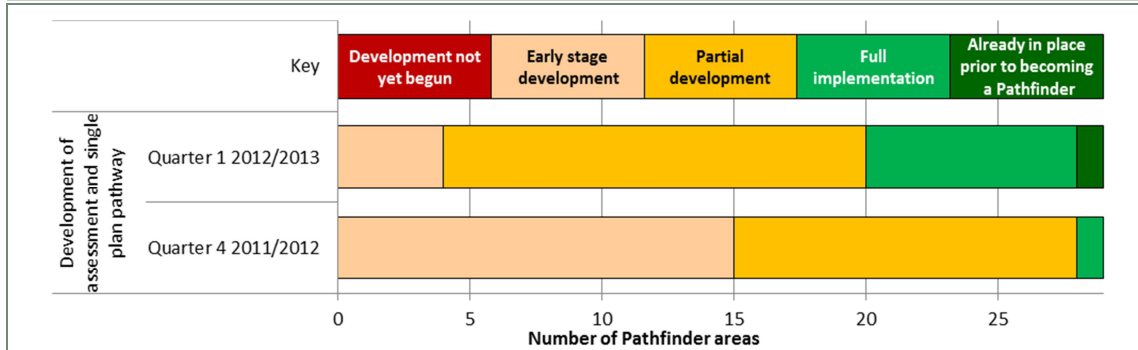
Setting up the infrastructure

Mapping the single assessment and plan pathway

- 4.3 There had been clear progress in mapping out the single assessment and plan pathway by the end of June 2012 (Figure 16). While one area had fully mapped out their intended pathway by March, 9 areas had done so by June 2012. Progress had also been made by areas in the earlier stages of development, while 15 areas had been at the 'early stage development' of their pathway by March, only four areas were still at this stage by the end of June.
- 4.4 Development of the assessment and single plan pathway (alongside engaging and recruiting families) had formed the primary focus of nearly all of the case study areas since the last visit in February 2012. Interestingly, of the nine case study areas that were able to provide a map of the pathway that they intended to take or were already taking participating families through, only two reported that they had reached 'full implementation' on this measure. This indicates that a number of areas that reported themselves to be at the 'partial development' stage may have developed a pathway

that they intended to refine and finalise following a trial phase with participating families.

Figure 16: Pathfinder area progress on mapping of the single assessment and plan pathway



N= 29 responses

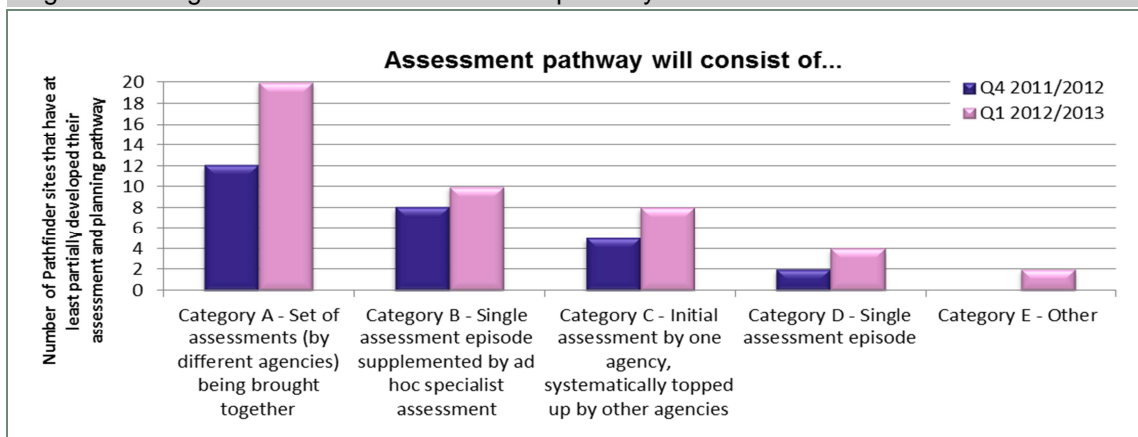
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Assessment

4.5 As more areas had (at least partially) developed their assessment and single plan pathways by June than March 2012 the monitoring data provided a clearer indication of the shape of the emerging assessment and single plan processes. The assessment processes were most commonly expected to consist of:

- Category A - A set of assessments (by different agencies being brought together) – 20 out of 25 areas
- Category B - Single assessment episode supplemented by ad hoc specialist assessments – 10 out of 25 areas
- Category C – Initial assessment by one agency, systematically topped up by other agencies – 8 out of 25 areas (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Single assessment element of the pathway



N= 25 responses Q1 2012/2013, N=14 responses Q4 2011/2012

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns; multiple responses possible

4.6 Although the evaluation had previously suggested that Category A was likely to be used for those families that were already accessing services, whilst Category B was more likely to be used for new families entering the system, the case study evidence illustrated that things may not be that clear cut. That is, a number of case study areas that had selected Category B were intending to aggregate existing information and feed this into a single assessment meeting with both the family and relevant professionals to develop a set of priorities and outcomes. Therefore, the distinction between the two categories is likely to be less stark than was first suggested and will be subject to further exploration over the next few months.

4.7 Nevertheless, the data itself supported the findings in the previous quarterly report and when combined with findings from the recent round of case study research indicated that:

- **Most areas would recruit families that were already accessing services** as their pathway heavily relied on drawing together existing information, supplemented by additional specialist assessment when required
- **The majority of areas were focusing on streamlining the review as opposed to the assessment process** - although a number of areas would have liked to rationalise assessments across agencies, the 18-month Programme did not provide sufficient opportunity to do so. This has led many areas to focus on drawing together existing assessment information
- **The streamlined review would engender a movement away from the prescription of needs to a family and outcome centred review** – the streamlined review processes were to involve the identification of a child/young person's strengths/dislikes and the outcomes they would like to achieve, which would be underpinned by existing assessment evidence. However, there remained confusion around how identified needs (from assessments) should and could be linked to outcomes, which required further consideration.

Planning

4.8 The most common planning approaches included holding a single planning event attended by professionals and the family (expected to be used in 22 out of 25 areas) and the use of a planning coordinator to create a plan with the family, while seeking professional input from relevant agencies (18 out of 25 areas) (Figure 18). The

relative prominence of these approaches compared to multiple staged planning events suggested that the prospect of a “single” plan was leading areas to integrate (or at least to aspire to integrate) the planning process as well as the planning document itself.

Figure 18: Single planning element of the pathway



N= 25 responses Q1 2012/2013, N=14 responses Q4 2011/2012

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

- 4.9 The integration was to involve multi-agency and outcome-based action planning. That is, a series of actions and support activities were to be holistically developed with input from all required services. Each action would in theory be linked to the achievement of one or more of a set of identified outcomes, assigned to one or more agencies to deliver and be easily measurable to ensure effectiveness could be assessed. However, although areas had set out relatively clear intentions, most were nervous about operationalising these, as they had little or no experience of working in this way.
- 4.10 The extent to which families were involved in planning (and each stage of the new pathway) appeared to differ considerably across the areas. That is, some areas appeared to have fully embraced a family-led process which would be supplemented by professional judgement, whilst others were likely to retain a professionally driven process which incorporated opportunities for families to express their views. The effectiveness of these two extreme cases was unclear and therefore it remained to be seen whether both have a part to play in any new system. However, it is likely that areas will need to offer families a choice of how much they'd like to be involved in their assessment/planning process to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all families.
- 4.11 Both of the most common planning approaches will require significant change to operationalise relative to the existing/traditional systems and approaches that are

currently being used. Table 8 sets out some of the underlying assumptions of each of the approaches, which will be tracked and assessed by the evaluation to understand whether the relevant changes are achieved by the Pathfinders.

Table 8: Assumptions and outcomes associated with the two most common planning approaches

Planning approach	Assumptions
Category A – Single planning event between all relevant professionals and the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professionals and the family are willing and able to attend the event, which often is not possible within the existing system as a result of capacity and resource issues Planning can be undertaken within a single event, which may or may not be achievable
Category B – Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coordinator has sufficient skills, capacity and influence to undertake the role in a timely manner Families and young people feel sufficiently involved in the planning process All professionals recognise the coordinator function as common currency and are therefore willing and able to commit time to supporting them and in turn the families

Source: SQW

- 4.12 The majority of case study areas had also not fully considered how long the new process would take, where only two out of the ten areas had produced an indicative timeframe for the new process. Other areas were simply relying on ensuring that the process was shorter than the current 26 week period associated with the statutory SEN statementing process, which seemed very cautious given most were undertaking streamlined review as opposed to assessment.

The single plan

- 4.13 Evidence from the case studies illustrated that all areas intended to trial a single multi-agency, holistic plan that would be contained in a single document combining both the results of the assessment/review and the plan. The plan would also be action as opposed to provision focused and would be jointly owned in most cases by both the family/young person and the relevant professionals (depending on the extent to which families and young people were involved in the planning process).
- 4.14 The move from multiple planning documents to a single plan/document was expected to enable:
- Families to hold all their information in one place/document
 - A reduction in the number of plans that are required
 - Creation of stronger linkages between assessment/review and planning.

- 4.15 Five out of the ten case study areas had developed a template (or set of templates for different age groups) which would be trialled with participating families. An additional two areas had mapped out a skeleton set of headings which were to form a framework against which reviews/plans would be developed and learning from the Pathfinder would subsequently inform the development of a final template.
- 4.16 The starting point for each of the templates/skeletons varied across the areas. This included: the CAF in areas where this tool had been well embedded and therefore accepted across professional disciplines; existing joint action planning processes and associated templates; the early support programme; transition plans and the Learning for Living and Work Framework; and starting from scratch in cases where existing templates were felt to be flawed.
- 4.17 There were a number of commonalities between the templates which included:
- **Key/basic information** - containing information about the child/young person and their family and the set of services they were currently being supported by
 - **A headline assessment/pen picture** – including an evidence-based picture of the strengths and dislikes (including the identification of needs) of the child/young person and their priorities
 - **The identification of outcomes** – a table to record outcomes (both short and longer term) and means of measuring these
 - **An action plan** – to show how each outcome would be achieved and which agency/service would be responsible for delivering each action
 - **Appendices** – to include supporting information such as assessment evidence.

Resourcing and accountability

- 4.18 Although planning-related developments across the case study areas appeared to align, there remained a number of issues that were yet to be fully considered:
- **How actions will be assigned to agencies and what happens in the event that any one agency does not agree to deliver a particular part of the plan** – although areas intended to assign actions to agencies, they had not worked through the detail of how this would be done

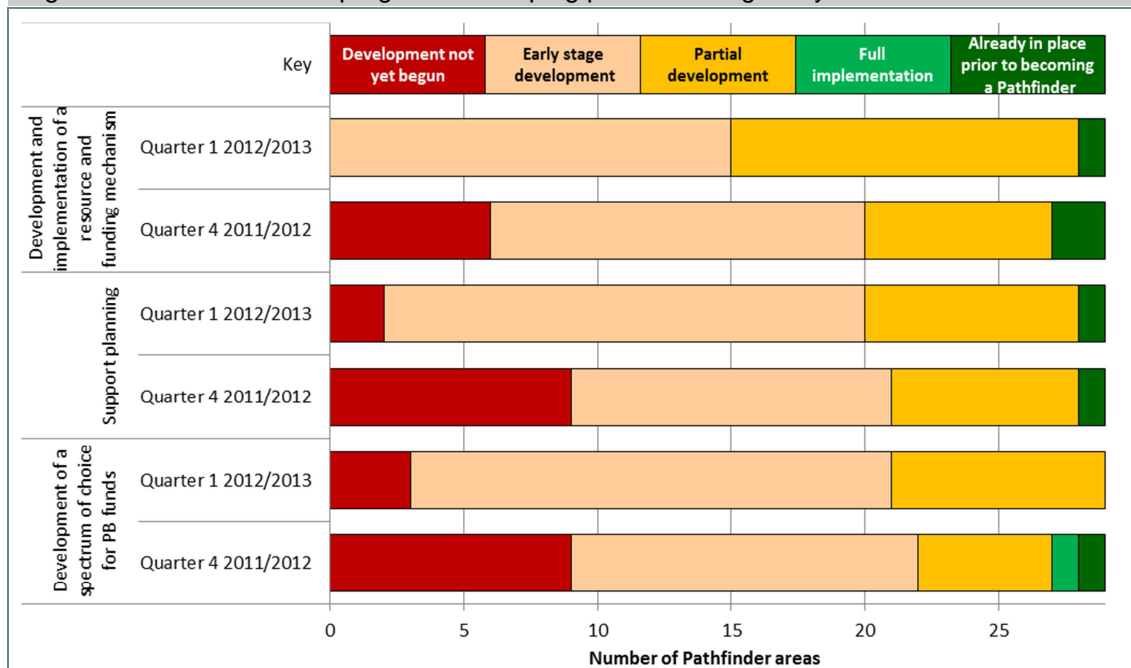
- **How actions will be funded** - some of the case study areas were intending to rely on working with the existing resource that was associated with participating families, whilst others intended to work through the issue as and when they single plans had been developed. Another area noted that the individual agencies were likely to be 'protective' of their own resource and voiced concerns that there was still no real incentive for one agency to invest if they thought future savings would be made by another agency
- **How the single plans will be signed off** - initial thinking around sign off included using some form of multi-agency process which was linked to agencies as opposed to individuals to avoid issues of staff turnover. One area added that sign off should be linked to a set timescale to avoid previous issues where agencies had agreed to supply a service and then retracted the service part way through delivery. Similarly another area was considering some form of proportionate sign off process, which would be based on the risk and resource associated with each plan. However, none of the case study areas had resolved how they would assign individual activities to individual agencies or how to avoid any shirking of responsibility further down the line
- **Who will ensure each of the activities is delivered** – again several of the areas were having an on-going debate about whose role it would be to ensure the single plan was delivered, which had included consideration of the coordinator/key worker, but this issue was yet to be resolved.

Development of personal budgets

- 4.19 Development of personal budgets remained at a formative stage across most areas (Figure 19). The majority of areas remained at early stage development in terms of the progress measures associated with personal budgets¹², although the number of areas that had not yet begun to develop each element reduced between March and June 2012. This finding again reiterates the evidence detailed in the March and June Quarterly Evaluation Reports, which identified personal budgets as one of the least developed aspects of the Pathfinders.

¹² Development and implementation of a resource and funding mechanism, support planning and development of a choice for PB funds.

Figure 19: Pathfinder area progress developing personal budgets by end of June 2012



N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

4.20 Progress across the case study areas was mixed, with only half of the areas having made tangible progress. These more advanced areas were either: building on pre-existing social care personal budget pilot activities; or had recognised that the development of personal budgets required external support and therefore had commissioned resource from external organisations, that had run workshops to help inform their initial developments.

4.21 Areas were attempting to trial either distinct or joint social care, health and SEN personal budget packages. In considering how to allocate resources:

- Two areas were undertaking a comprehensive unit costing exercise across social care, health and SEN to inform longer-term developments of a resource allocation mechanism
- Another area was developing a single multi-agency resource allocation mechanism
- Two additional areas were developing distinct mechanisms for social care, SEN and health.

4.22 Additional challenges identified during the case study research included:

- **Difficulties understanding how to begin the development of personal budgets** – those areas that had made limited progress expressed concerns

that they did not know where to start or which services should form part of a personal budget, which had led them to make slow progress

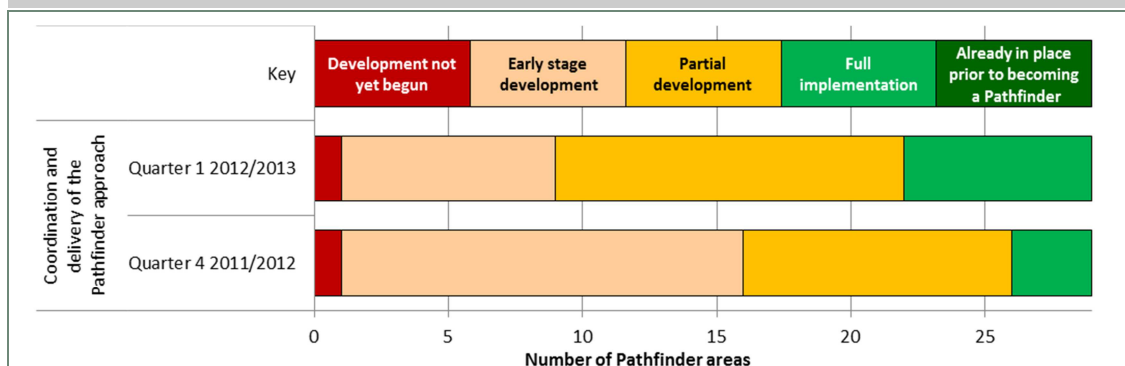
- **A dichotomy between the means by which social care/health and SEN services were costed** – a number of areas discussed differences between the model by which social care/some health services originated, which tended to allocate up front resources prior to planning: and SEN services, which tended to allocate resources at the end of the planning stage (i.e. based on provision). Areas therefore needed to reconcile this difference in approach and work through whether they wished to provide an up-front indicative budget prior to the planning stage, cost the plan once it had been developed or use a combination of these approaches
- **The piloting of personal budgets outside of the assessment/review and single planning process** - some areas had made the decision to pilot personal budgets outside of their assessment/review and planning process as they felt it would be too difficult to align the two during the short timescales of the Pathfinder Programme. However, piloting of distinct activities with separate groups of families is likely to be a high risk strategy as it may lead to a duplication of infrastructure and will not provide a true sense of the skills and resource implications of an integrated system
- **Concerns that the Pathfinder timescales will limit the extent to which areas can move beyond the provision of notional personal budgets** – a number of areas voiced concerns that they would be unable to release service-specific budgets to facilitate direct payments prior to March 2013. Provision of notional budgets was therefore more likely in the short-term.

Coordination and delivery of the Pathfinder approach

- 4.23 The Quarter 1 2012/13 monitoring submissions illustrated an increase in activities to consider how to coordinate and deliver the new Pathfinder approaches, with two thirds of all areas (20) reporting having reached partial or full implementation against the element by June 2012 (Figure 20). However, a handful of areas made only limited progress, which was a cause for concern.
- 4.24 The data also showed that progress against this element of the CDF tended to be dependent on progress made developing the assessment and single plan pathway.

In addition, it was positively associated with the extent to which families and young people had been engaged and recruited to take part in the Pathfinder.

Figure 20: Pathfinder area progress on coordination and delivery of the Pathfinder approach



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

4.25 In addition, the case study evidence reiterated that key-working would form a common element across all the ten areas. The common factors of key working included a need to:

- Build the role from existing capacity and resource to avoid creating another tier of professionals
- Formalise the key working role to ensure that those that took on a key worker role had sufficient influence to make changes to plans and hold agencies to account
- Ensure those that were acting as key workers had sufficient local and subject knowledge, as well as mentoring and brokering skills to enable them to effectively fulfil the role
- Put in place a set of minimum standards to guarantee consistency across the professionals undertaking the role.

4.26 Interestingly, three of the ten case study areas had chosen to split the key working function into two distinct roles:

- A coordinator to draw together all the relevant information into the assessment/review and planning document
- A family supporter/advocate to support the family through the process.

4.27 The rationale for dividing the role in one area came from previous experience of running a key worker project, which illustrated that key workers often got bogged

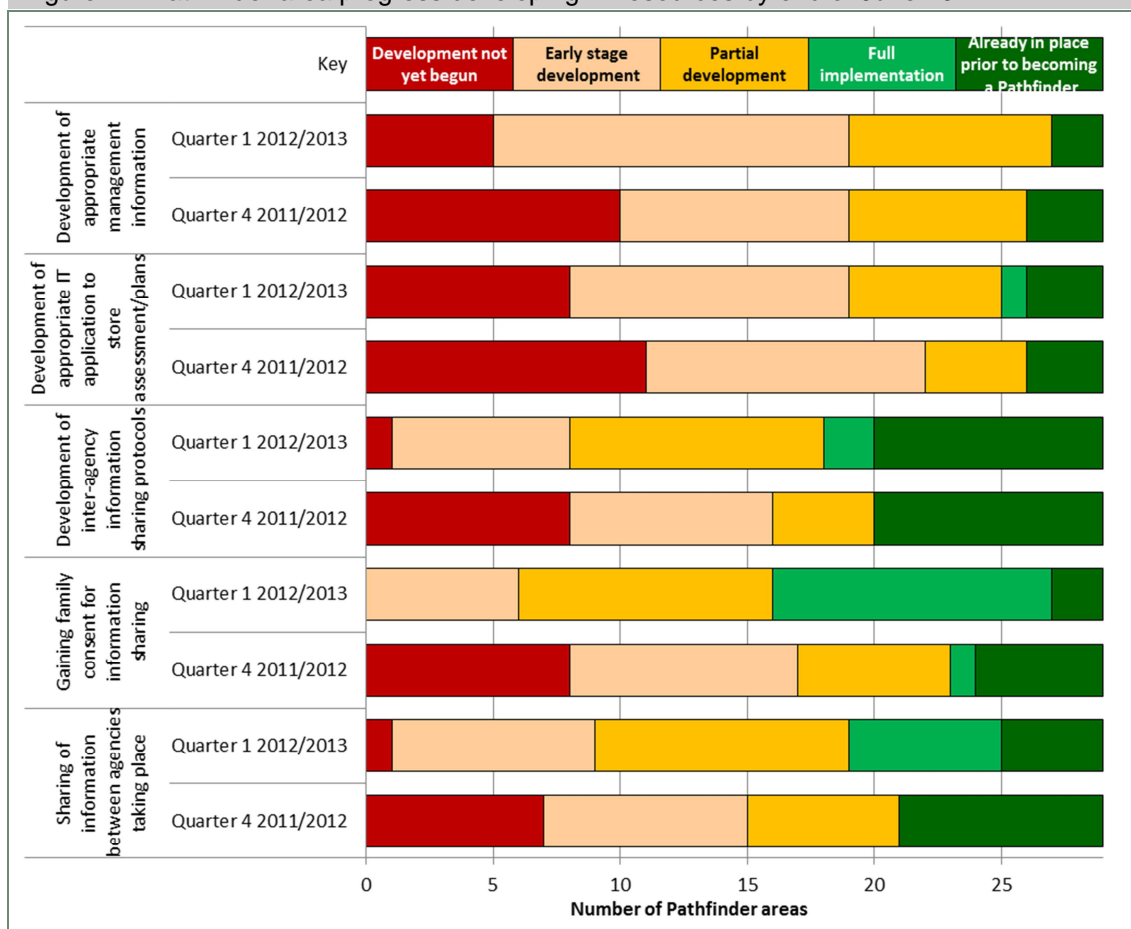
down with administrative tasks, which had had a negative impact on the time they were able to spend with families.

- 4.28 One of the areas that had split its key working function had also selected to deliver both roles through the VCS as a means of also introducing independence into the process. However, the area also commented that they were likely to face financial challenges sustaining this resource beyond the funded Pathfinder programme.
- 4.29 Scalability of the key working function over the longer term was also a cause for concern in a number of the case study areas. Although many had intended to provide participating families with a choice of key worker, the small scale nature of the local trials and workforce development implications associated with offering a true choice had often limited this development. In contrast, one area that had offered their families a choice of key worker had experienced high demand for professionals from services that were already undertaking multi-agency working and limited demand from other services. This had initially caused some initial tension between the Pathfinder team and the services that had not been selected however, the managers of the less demanded services were seeking to use the information to inform their next round of staff training.
- 4.30 In addition, some areas had sought to limit the numbers of cases that could be assigned to each key worker to a maximum of 1 or 2 families, as they were often taking on Pathfinder cases in addition to their existing workload. However, the limited exposure to the new ways of working may cause challenges as areas consider how to roll out their approaches. It also raises issue of how families in any rollout would be supported if similar restrictions remained in place.
- 4.31 Given the heavy reliance on workforce development to embed and sustain the key working function, it is likely that areas will need to invest heavily in cultural change activities as they move forward beyond the Pathfinder.

Development of IT resources

- 4.32 Limited progress appeared to have been made in terms of the development of IT infrastructure and appropriate management information (Figure 21). However, substantial progress had been made in the development of information sharing protocols (both between agencies and families) and in the actual sharing of data between March and June 2012.

Figure 21: Pathfinder area progress developing IT resources by end of June 2012



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring submissions

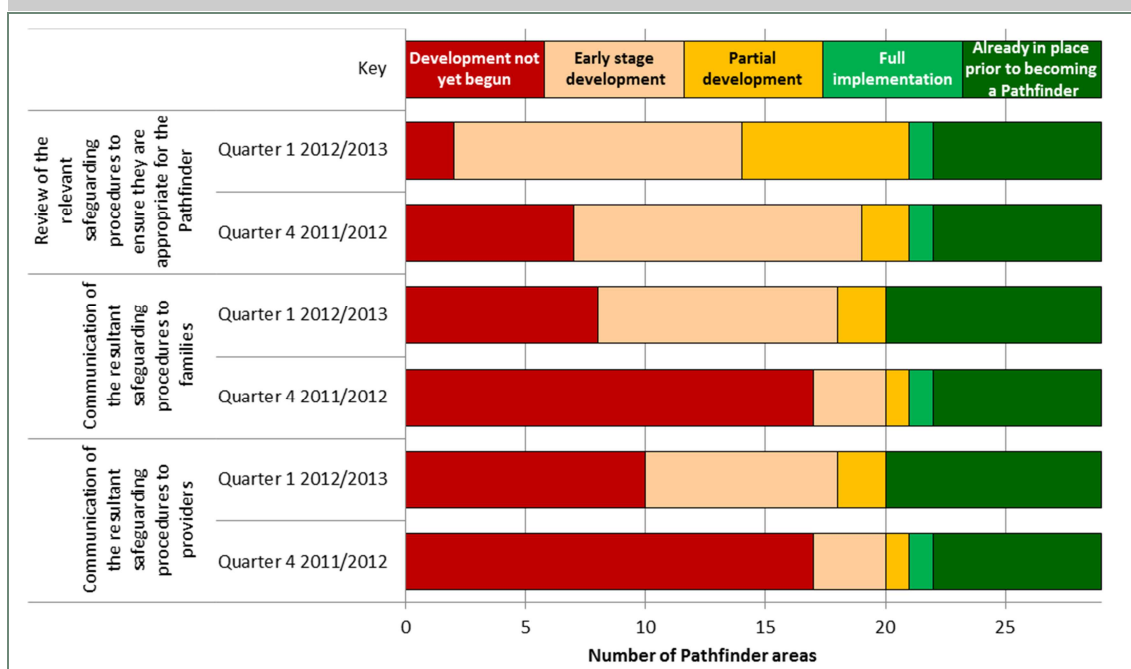
- 4.33 These findings were supported by evidence from the case studies, which showed that most had developed or already had in place means of gaining family consent to share information across agencies and inter-agency information sharing protocols. Similarly, although some were considering how they might develop their IT systems over the longer-term (i.e. beyond the lifetime of the funded Pathfinder Programme), all the areas intended to rely on secure email and/or paper copies of information for the purposes of the Pathfinder. That is, areas did not feel that the small scale nature of the Pathfinder warranted the level of investment that would be required to re-develop IT systems and some felt that a national solution should be developed to address this issue (although there is no commitment to do so).

Safeguarding and risk management

- 4.34 Most areas (27) had begun to review the relevant safeguarding procedures by June 2012 or had them in place prior to becoming a Pathfinder (Figure 22). However, no further Pathfinders reached full implementation of this progress measure between March and June 2012.

4.35 Evidence from the case studies supported this finding.

Figure 22: Pathfinder area progress on safeguarding and risk management by end of June



N= 29 responses

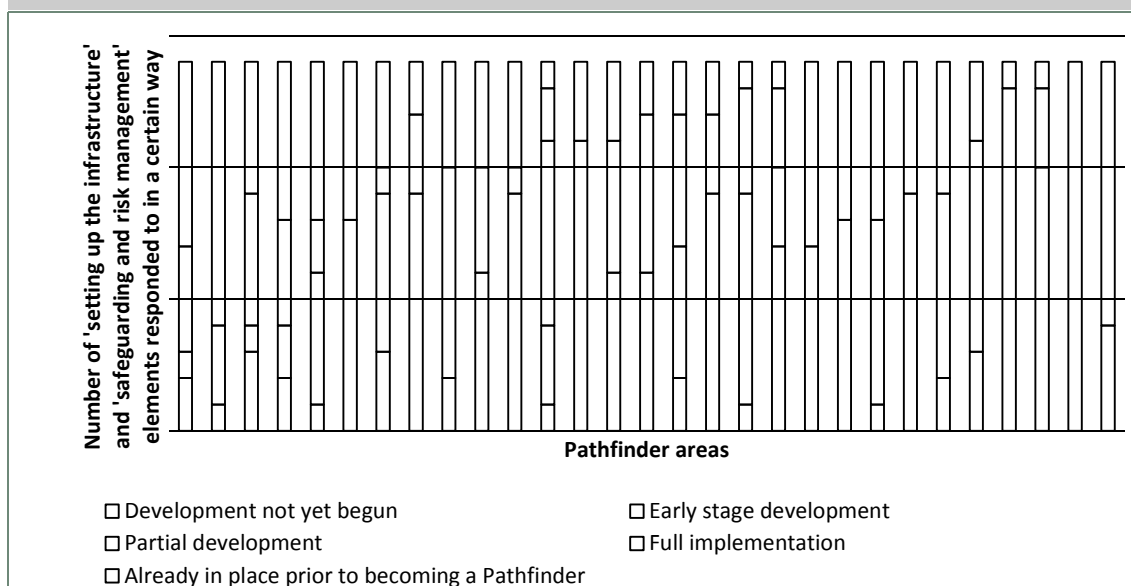
Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Variations in self assessed progress across Pathfinder areas

4.36 Figure 28 illustrates the perceived progress made by each of the Pathfinder areas (each column represents a single area's responses) against each of the 14 constituent progress measures contained in the setting up the infrastructure and safeguarding and risk management themes. It shows the extent of variation in progress across different Pathfinders; with three areas fully delivering against at least 10 of the 14 progress measures, while two areas had not moved past early stage development on any of the 14 measures and one hadn't yet begun to develop 10 of the 14 progress measures.

4.37 The differences in starting point and thus 'head start' that some areas got in developing their infrastructure was also clear; with 61% of all the elements which were fully in place by June 2012 having already been in place prior to the Pathfinder. Areas with less track record and existing structures in place would be expected to take longer to set up their infrastructure, and in some cases loss of key staff had also delayed development. However, the early stage of infrastructure development across some areas casts doubt over their ability to take families through the Pathfinder process within the evaluation timescales.

Figure 23: Responses to the series of monitoring questions on setting up the infrastructure



Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns
N= 29 responses

Summary

- 4.38 Table 8 presents a summary of the progress made against the setting up the infrastructure and safeguarding and risk management themes of the CDF by the end of June 2012.

Table 8: Summary of progress made against the setting up the Pathfinder infrastructure theme

- Progress against the setting up the infrastructure theme of the CDF was mixed, with some Pathfinder areas reporting good progress across the majority of the elements, whilst others had made little progress and remained a cause for concern. Those that had made more progress tended to be the areas that had a full project development team in place, signalling the need for dedicated resource
- It appeared that the primary focus for most areas had been the development of a local assessment and single planning pathway, which included consideration of assessment/review, planning and the single planning document. Most areas had either fully or partially mapped out their single assessment and plan pathway, with a number also having developed a single plan template
- Emerging evidence indicated that these pathways were more commonly expected to consist of:
 - Assessments - a set of assessments (by different agencies being brought together) OR a single assessment episode supplemented by ad hoc specialist assessments OR an initial assessment by one agency, systematically topped up by other agencies, all of which would be multi-agency and outcomes-based. This implied that most areas intended to recruit families that were already in the system and were focusing on streamlining the review as opposed to the assessment process
 - Planning – single planning events and the use of a planning coordinator to create the plan with the family and liaise with professionals from relevant agencies to obtain their input, both of which would require significant changes to be made to existing working practices
- Evidence from the case studies illustrated that all areas intended to trial a single multi-agency, holistic plan that would be contained in a single document combining both the results of the assessment/review and the plan. In addition, there were a number of commonalities between the single plan templates which included:
 - **Key/basic information** - containing information about the child/young person and their family and the set of services they were currently being supported by

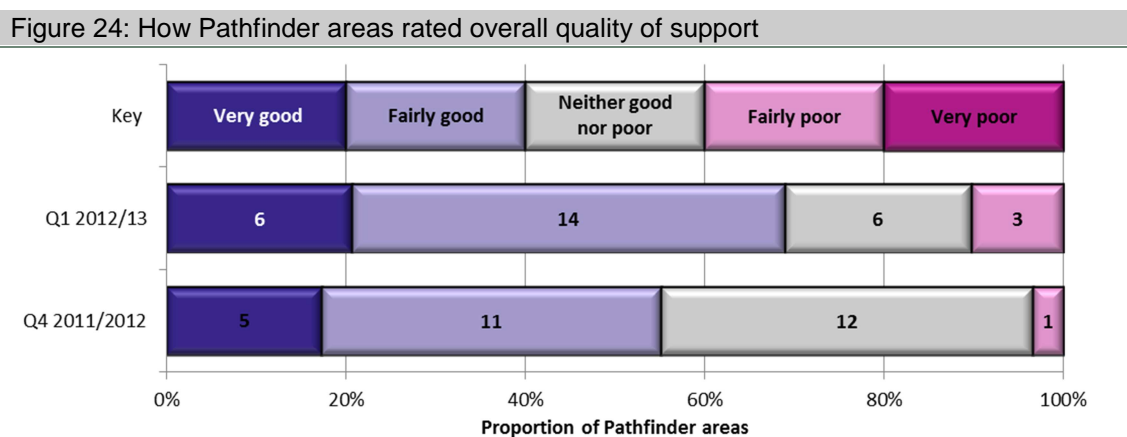
- **A headline assessment/pen picture** – including an evidence-based picture of the strengths and dislikes (including the identification of needs) of the child/young person and their priorities
 - **The identification of outcomes** – a table to record outcomes (both short and longer term) and means of measuring these
 - **An action plan** – to show how each outcome would be achieved and which agency/service would be responsible for delivering each action
 - **Appendices** – to include supporting information such as assessment evidence.
 - Resourcing and accountability of the plan had not been fully considered, which had left the following questions unanswered:
 - How actions will be assigned to agencies and what happens in the event that any one agency does not agree to deliver a particular part of the plan
 - How actions will be funded
 - How the single plans will be signed off
 - Who will ensure each of the activities is delivered?
 - Areas that had made good progress developing an assessment and planning pathway also tended to have be at an advanced stage of considering how to coordinate and deliver their new approach. This had included consideration of the skills and capacity that would be required to deliver effective key working and had led most of the case study areas to look to use existing staff to resource this aspect of the Pathfinder
 - Key working is seen as important in developing plans. Three of the ten case study areas had chosen to split the key working function into two distinct roles:
 - A coordinator to draw together all the relevant information into the assessment/review and planning document
 - A family supporter/advocate to support the family through the process
 - Limited progress had been made around the development of personals budgets, IT resources, safeguarding and risk management by the end of June 2012.
-

5: Feedback on the Pathfinder Support Team

5.1 This chapter presents a summary of the feedback provided by Pathfinder areas on the activities provided by the Pathfinder Support Team (PST) over the first quarter of 2012/2013 with reference to feedback received on the preceding time period. This data was collected as part of the quarterly monitoring data submissions which sought feedback on the PST through a mixture of scaled and open questions. The data is augmented by qualitative feedback gathered as part of the latest round of case study visits.

Overall quality and importance of support

- 5.2 Over two thirds of areas (69%) considered that overall quality of all of the support provided by the PST (including support direct to local areas and more generally available workshops, web site, etc.) was very good or fairly good, while 21% reported it as neither good nor poor and 10% who rated it as fairly poor. This represents an additional four sites rating the overall quality of support as fairly or very good, which is encouraging (Figure 24).
- 5.3 Three areas rated the quality of support as poor. Where perceptions of support had improved in the case study areas they usually related this to increased engagement or a sense that their specific adviser was now clearer on what they could offer and the subject area.



N= 29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Pathfinder support events

5.4 Pathfinders continued to be pleased with the events held throughout Quarter 1 2012/2013:

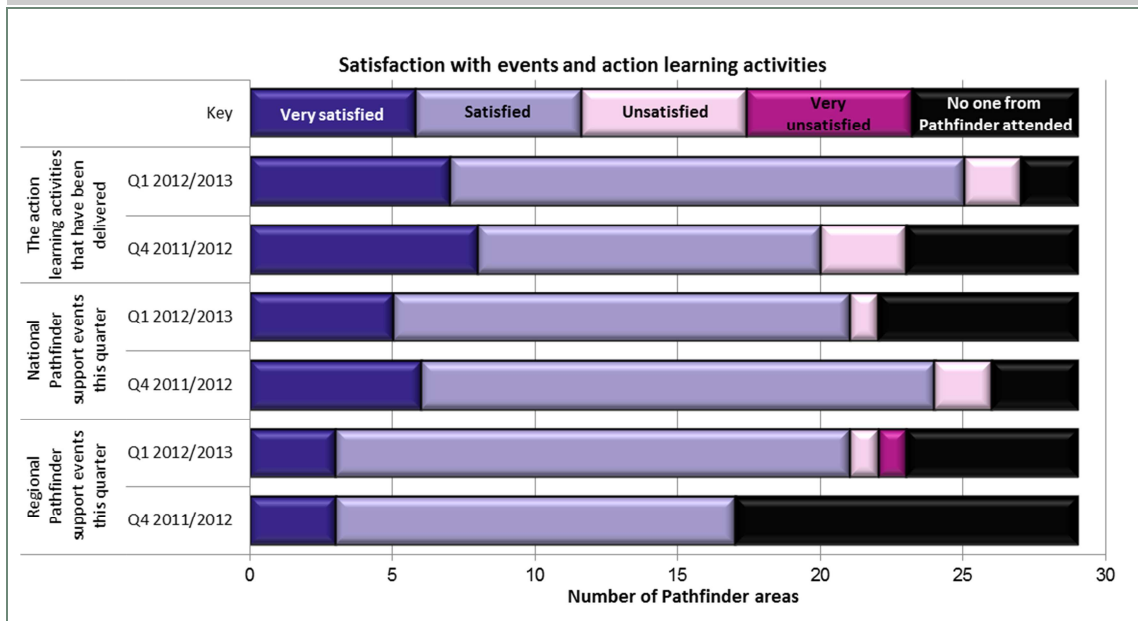
- A quarter (26%) of areas that had attended action learning networks were very satisfied, and 86% of the areas reported being either very satisfied or satisfied
- 95% of areas that attended national events were either satisfied or very satisfied
- Over 90% of those that attended regional events were satisfied or very satisfied (Figure 25).

5.5 Amongst the case study areas, those who had attended events generally rated them highly. They appreciated:

- The opportunity to meet and learn from other areas, with whom they could share ideas and concerns
- The attendance of both DfE and DH, and the opportunities this offered to feed in to policy thinking. One area commented that the two-way conversation that was taking place between the Departments and the areas was promising.

5.6 The only real concern raised about the events was the large number that took place in the lead up to the summer holidays, which put a strain on people having to travel. This was particularly acute for those who had to travel a long distance to attend the events. Distance was also seen as a barrier to some parents attending.

Figure 25: Satisfaction with National and Regional Pathfinder support events and action



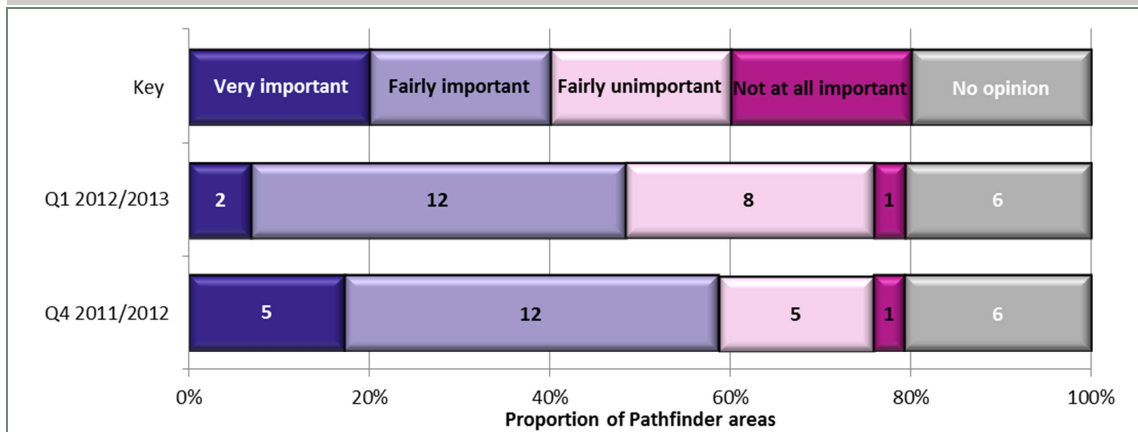
N=29 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Importance of support

- 5.7 Opinions from areas were mixed about the value of the PST in determining the overall success of the Pathfinder. Predominantly, Pathfinder areas were of the opinion that the PST was fairly important (41%) to the success of the Pathfinder, with another two rating it as very important (interestingly the same two as last time, one of which is a case study area which had been very positive about meeting other Pathfinders at workshops). However, this is somewhat counteracted by the 31% which considered the PST support was fairly unimportant or not important, and the additional 21% of areas that held no opinion either way (Figure 26).
- 5.8 In comparison to the previous quarter, fewer Pathfinders rated the support that they received as very or fairly important to the success of the Pathfinder. This may reflect growing confidence and networks amongst the areas, although half do still view the support as important.

Figure 26: Area perceptions of how important to the support from the PST is to the success of



N= 25 responses

Source: Pathfinder monitoring returns

Summary

5.9 Table 9 presents a summary of the key points from this chapter.

Table 9: Summary of key findings about PST support to Pathfinders

- Over two thirds of areas (69%) considered that overall quality of support provided by the PST was very good or fairly good. This represents an additional four sites rating the overall quality of support as fairly or very good, which is encouraging
- Three areas rated the quality of support as poor. However, only in one case was this the same as the three areas which were dissatisfied area with the support offered, and none of the three were the areas which reported being dissatisfied in the previous quarter
- The PST organised a series of events for Pathfinders to come together. The extent of engagement from individual areas in the events varied considerable: six Pathfinders attended 6 or more events; while five attended no events and a further three just one
- The feedback from those who attended events was usually positive. The areas liked the opportunity to share experiences with other Pathfinders and with DfE/DH
- While satisfaction with support remained high, fewer Pathfinders than in the previous quarter rated the support that they received as very or fairly important to the success of the Pathfinder. That said almost half of the areas still rated the support as very or fairly important.

6: SEN Direct Payments

Introduction

- 6.1 The SEND Green Paper made a commitment to “*test how the scope of direct payments might be increased to include funding streams from education and health*”. This led to the creation of a new power in the Education Act 1996 to establish a set of pilots by order to test the making of direct payments for those education services that are covered by:
- The special education provision specified in a SEN statement
 - Provision identified in a Section 139A Learning and Skills Act 2000 Assessment
 - Transport (or anything else that may be subject to arrangements under specified sections of the 1996 Education Act).
- 6.2 The legislation covered all SEND Pathfinder local authorities as well as the five local authorities that had previously participated in the Individual Budgets (IBs) for Families with Disabled Children pilot but are not part of the wider SEND Pathfinder (SEN DP only areas).
- 6.3 This chapter presents commentary and analysis on the monitoring returns received from all the SEN DP pilot areas to the end of June 2012. It includes both the SEND Pathfinder areas as described previously in this report and the first set of monitoring returns for the five SEN DP only areas. In addition, this chapter also provides a summary of the evidence emerging from the first round of SEN DP pilot case study visits, which were undertaken over the summer 2012 and involved 14 local authorities. The chapter is set out as follows:
- Intentions of areas in relation to SEN Direct Payments
 - Progress in developing SEN Direct Payments
 - Progress in engaging families
 - Progress in engaging schools and colleges
 - Progress of SEN DP only areas in developing the Common Delivery Framework for the pilot

- Identified challenges and risks
- Next steps for the evaluation research.

Intentions in relation to SEN Direct Payments

- 6.4 Most of the case study areas viewed the SEN DP pilot as building on previous personalisation work that they had undertaken and so saw the extension as fitting well with their existing direction of travel. There was a general consensus that they were moving towards a more person-centred approach, with greater integration between the different agencies. As with the wider Pathfinder development, sites were seeking to engage families in the development of SEN DP offers. A couple of areas also specifically mentioned that it fitted well with their move away from a service delivery to a commissioning model. Therefore, the move to develop SEN DPs was seen as a further iteration and development, rather than a completely new thing, which should help areas to move fairly quickly towards implementation. At the same time, responses to the scoping questions that were sent to all sites listed in the SEN Direct Payments Pilot Order suggested that not all the Pathfinder sites were intending to develop SEN DPs within the evaluation time period.

Anticipated impacts/outcomes

- 6.5 The case study areas highlighted a range of outcomes and impacts that they anticipated could arise from the introduction of SEN Direct Payments. These were broadly an extension of the potential outcomes and impacts identified through the SEND Pathfinder work. They focused on children, young people and their families having greater control and choice over the support package that they receive, which was expected to improve outcomes for the children and young people concerned. Case study areas expected that increased choice and control would offer more flexibility in terms of the make-up of support packages.
- 6.6 Three areas also expected that the pilot would help to improve joint working across the agencies and one area noted that the prospect of potential cost savings was helping to drive the SEN DP and the wider personalisation agenda in their area.

The targeting of SEN Direct Payments

- 6.7 The legislation did not specify who areas should target with their SEN DP offer. It was left up to the areas to identify where they wanted to focus their efforts. Through

the case study visits we explored the groups for which areas were intending to develop an SEN DP offer.

- 6.8 As discussed in Chapter 4, the majority of sites were still at the formative stages of developing personal budgets. In relation to SEN DPs specifically, case study sites were still at the early stage of trying to decide which funding streams would be included. A range of budgets were being explored for possible inclusion in SEN DP offers, with nine case study areas initially focusing on the inclusion of transport budgets since they were viewed as relatively straightforward to disaggregate. This seemed to reflect the example developed through one of the IB pilot areas, which has been well publicised and was seen to provide a model that others could follow.
- 6.9 Beyond transport, there was a great deal of uncertainty amongst areas around which services/situations will lend themselves to a SEN DP. As a result most were taking an iterative approach to the pilot to allow them to explore what might be offered and be acceptable to providers and families. Table 10 shows the different groups that the case study sites were intending to target initially.

Table 10: Examples of Target groups

Families eligible for (or already in receipt) of Home to School Transport (this was by far the most common approach across the case studies)

Families with children at special schools that have signed up to participate in a SEN Direct Payment pilot. The local authority is working with a small number of special schools to model personal transport budgets with a view to offering eligible children and young people PTBS (and/or independent travel training)

In one area, seven schools (comprising a mix of special schools, mainstream schools and schools with enhanced resources) have signed up to participate in a SEN Direct Payment pilot. Schools will recruit families to go through the pilot and it is anticipated that each school will test SEN DPs with one or two families initially, although the detail has not been decided

There are 40 families that meet the criteria for CENA (Community Enhanced Nursery Allocation) funding. This provides families with SEN support at nursery in accordance with their agreed education plan. Previously the money was given to nurseries who discussed its use with parents, but the hope now is to pass it to parents as a DP

Children/Young People in a particular year group in a special school. This group will be offered a direct payment to assist in their work experience. The hope is to free up thinking about what can be done, and potentially build flexibility to address key issues such as transport to and from the employer

The local authority has asked for nominations of potential families via SENCOs, educational psychologists, locality based multi-agency referral teams and health. The main criterion was that children/ young people nominated should have needs across all three services (education, health and social care).

Pathfinder families who are eligible for support from funding streams that can be easily disaggregated (Decisions had not yet been taken about which funding streams would be included in SEN DP offers)

Targeting children who are eligible for a SEN Statement, at a level over and above the 10/20 hours of delegated funding. Within this group, the local authority is looking to target cases where parents are willing to test out a new way of working and where the relevant school wants to test out the potential of families accessing SEN DPs

Identifying young people who are currently out of county, or at risk of going out of county, who could potentially use a SEN DP to access in county education provision and support

Targeting families on an individual basis, where a SEN DP was expected to help meet the family's needs better than current arrangement for service provision (examples are provided below)

Source: SQW Case study research

- 6.10 At this stage, many of the areas noted that they had not ruled out offering SEN DPs from particular funding streams or to particular age groups, but that they were focusing on only a few areas initially. One area did not yet have any indication of which age groups they might include in their SEN DP offer, reflecting wider uncertainty about how they would target their Pathfinder offer.
- 6.11 To-date, the identification of potential budgets has largely been for pragmatic reasons:
- Budgets that have been selected to-date were seen as relatively straightforward to disaggregate into unit costs
 - Pilot Project Managers were in a position to alter existing budgeting/assessment and resource allocation systems for particular budgets
 - A couple of areas were already offering personal allowances to parents for SEN transport.
- 6.12 Six areas were intending to only target **individual families** that, due to their particular circumstances, they thought might benefit from the pilot. One area explained that they had opted for this approach to allow them to be able to test out the development of SEN DPs with a small number of families before they committed to rolling it out further. Amongst those areas that were targeting individual families, most were intending to include a range of age groups, support levels and funding streams. Three areas were specifically looking to target existing complex cases, as they felt that a direct payment could allow greater flexibility in terms of accessing the correct mix of services for meeting their needs. The identification of possible families was being done through two routes: (i) recommendations from local authority staff; and (ii) schools were asked to identify appropriate families. Examples of the types of packages being explored with individual families is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Examples of SEN DP offers to individual families

In one local authority, behavioural therapies are usually provided by the school. The option of a SEN Direct Payment is being given to one family to allow them to access the same service over the summer holidays to allow the family greater flexibility about when they access the service.

The use of a SEN Direct Payment is being explored for a family that provides home schooling. The family will receive the money that is currently used to support Part 3 of their child's Statement. At present this money goes to the school, but the child no longer attends schools. It was hoped that by letting the money follow the child, the child will receive higher quality support.

One young person requires a lot of one-to-one support but the school is not able to meet this need. Discussion around support needs suggested that the young person would benefit most from work based provision and so the family are now looking to use a direct payment (consisting of both education and care funding) to provide support to the young person in the work place. The budget will be used to cover training, support and transport costs

One local authority has identified a young person who has been out of school for a period of time and the family is looking to have non-standard provision funded through a personal budget (possibly involving the use of a direct payment). The possibility of using the funding to buy a piece of technology to allow the young person to access online education provision was being explored

One 16 year old has been identified who is provided with a home learning programme. They wish to continue this post 16 and so the local authority is looking at ways of taking the funding out of the system and to pay this directly to the young person to enable them to do so

Where pupils currently require out of county education provision, or are at risk of going out of county, an LA is looking at the possibility of providing the family with a SEN Direct Payment to allow their child to attend a new ASD unit which is being built locally and to then supplement this with other activities (agreed on an individual basis with the families concerned)

The family of a 3 year old child with a severe visual impairment was being offered a direct payment to support the provision of music therapy. This support was being provided on top of the family's core offer, through which the child received a place at a local special school

Source: SQW Case study visits

- 6.13 Seven case study areas were investigating the possibility of funding for **pre-school age children** being offered as SEN DPs. Where sites had identified possible budgets, these included exploring nursery and childcare funding (2 areas), Sure Start funding (1 area) and SEN transport (1 area), although three areas were not yet able to provide any indication of which education funding streams might be included in the SEN DP offering.
- 6.14 Twelve case study areas were exploring budgets for **school-age children (5-16 year olds)**. A focus on SEN transport was prevalent, with nine of the 14 case study areas exploring this funding stream. Two of the areas had not yet begun to identify possible budgets for inclusion in the SEN DP offering to this age group. Other education budgets being explored by the case study areas included funding associated with statements (4 areas), dedicated schools budget (1 area), complex cases funding (1 area), joint health and education equipment funding (1 area) and work experience funding (1 area).

- 6.15 Ten case study areas were exploring the possibility of including **post-16 funding**. Again, SEN Transport was the most popular budget, with four areas exploring the possible inclusion of this funding stream. Three areas were not able to indicate which budgets they might include in SEN DP offers at post-16 level. This lack of clarity reflected on-going discussions with local providers, or waiting to see which families are selected and then targeting budgets relevant to those families. Other education funding streams that had been identified for initial exploration included dedicated schools budget (1 area), complex cases funding (1 area), Education Funding Agency funding (1 area) and additional funding over and above the core offer (1 area).
- 6.16 Three case study areas were considering offering SEN DPs to **post-19s**. However, at the time of the case study visits, they did not yet have a clear idea of what education funds might be included in a SEN DP offer.
- 6.17 In several cases areas are intending to offer more than one budget as a way of giving families more flexibility. Figure 27 shows examples of the combinations of budgets that individual areas are thinking of offering as SEN DPs.

Figure 27: Examples of local area intentions

- SEN transport and dedicated schools budget
- SEN transport and funding associated with statements
- SEN transport, funding associated with statements and elements of nursery or childcare funding
- Complex cases personalisation element funding and other school or LA budgets (not including place funding)
- SEN transport, equipment funding, funding associated with statements and elements of Sure Start funding
- SEN transport and work experience budget

Challenges associated with selecting and disaggregating budgets

- 6.18 Selecting and disaggregating budgets was reported to be a complicated process. Areas were finding it challenging to establish unit costs for services, which would allow funding to be allocated to individuals. Where a fixed amount of funding supported a number of students (for example, through provision of a learning support assistant) concern was expressed that allocating a share of the total cost of the support to individual Direct Payments would either result in double funding or would result in the service for other students being withdrawn.
- 6.19 One of the biggest challenges that areas had encountered was **understanding how to access different funding streams**, particularly in cases where the funds were not held directly by the local authority. For example, three areas delegate the majority of

their SEN resources directly to schools and so were trying to establish how they might be able to recover some of that funding to allow it to be used in a SEN DP.

- 6.20 Accessing funding from the Education Funding Agency (previously the Young People's Learning Agency) was also seen to be challenging. Funding must be paid directly to the provider and therefore cannot be paid directly to either the local authority or to the family. One area had overcome this by identifying a local college which had agreed to act as a conduit for the funding. The college had agreed to receive the funding and pay it to the local authority, which then intended to transfer this to the young person in tranches to enable the young person to pay their chosen provider directly and therefore manage their learning.
- 6.21 Concerns were also expressed about the school funding reforms and the implications that these could potentially have for a local SEN DP offer. In the short term the need to focus on implementing school funding reforms could draw attention away from the development of DPs; and in the longer term areas were uncertain how far money that would now go directly to schools could be accessed for DP. That said, the money that will go to local authorities under the new system would appear to be an ideal opportunity to develop a personal budget approach.

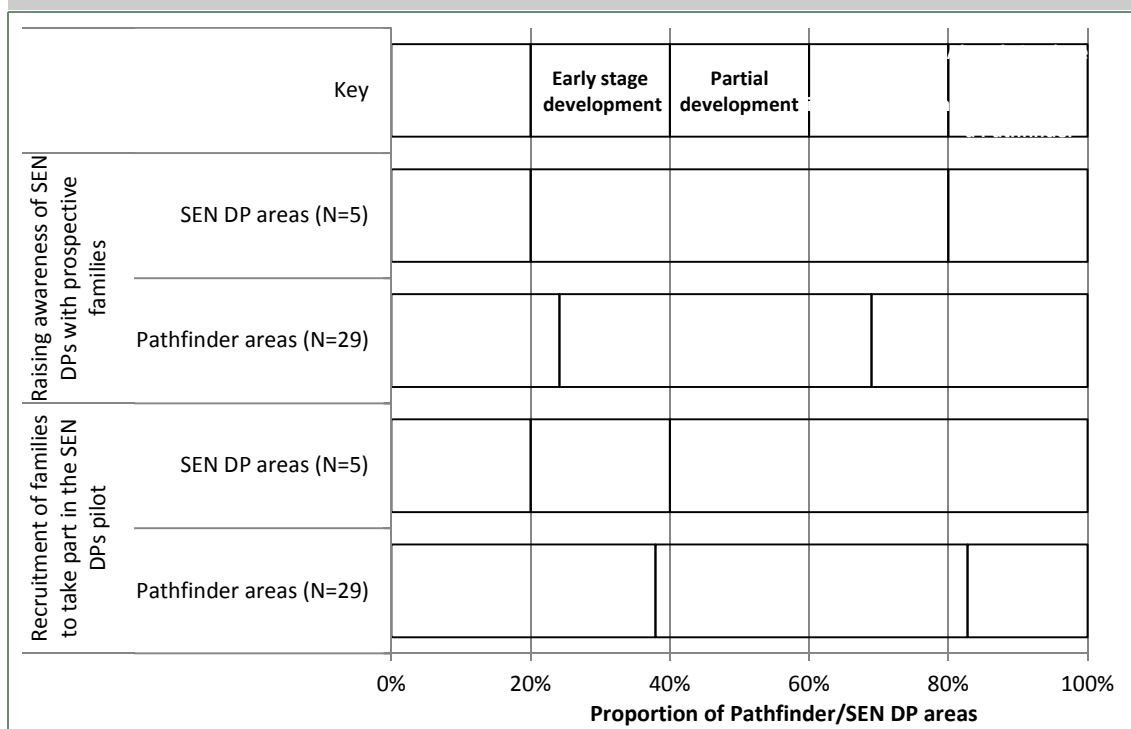
Assessment and Resource Allocation

- 6.22 Both the SEND Pathfinder areas and the SEN DP only areas were experiencing a number of challenges in relation to the development of assessment and resource allocation tools. There was a lot of uncertainty amongst areas about how they could cost education services and a skills gap was identified in this area. As a result, most areas were initially concentrating on budgets that were seen to be relatively easy to disaggregate, with a few areas beginning to develop unit costings for personal transport budgets, for example by calculating a mileage rate to allow resources to be provided based on distance travelled.
- 6.23 In addition two of the SEN DP only areas were looking at unit costing around early years and another area was looking at how best it could allocate costs to the actions specified in existing statements.

Progress in engaging families

- 6.24 Most areas were still at an early stage in relation to raising awareness about SEN DPs with prospective families and recruiting them to the pilot (Figure 28).

Figure 28: Pathfinder and SEN DP pilot area progress engaging and raising awareness of



N=34 responses

Source: Pathfinder Monitoring Returns, June 2012.

6.25 Methods of promotion that areas had used or were intending to use included:

- Information leaflets** – One area had sent information leaflets to families to introduce the SEN DP pilot, with another two intending to use this approach. One of these areas was intending to provide a separate leaflet for young people as they anticipated that there may be cases where the parent/carer wished to retain the local authority offer but the young person did not. They therefore saw value in also targeting the young people themselves
- Writing to families** – Three areas had sent out letters to families, providing further information about SEN DPs and inviting them to join the pilot and another two areas were intending to do so over the coming months. There were some concerns that this approach was unlikely to prove effective, with two of the areas that had used the approach to-date noting that they also intended to follow the letter up with phone calls to the families involved
- Discussions with parent/carers** – One area had begun preliminary meetings with parent/carer representatives to see how families might take this forward. Others were organising events for September, once the schools have returned, to explain the process to parents and provide them with further information

- Four areas were intending to **recruit through schools, or through events held at schools**, although this had not yet begun
- Three areas reported undertaking no promotional activities in relation to SEN DPs to-date. One of these areas noted that families were putting themselves forward to participate in the pilot through word of mouth and building on their IB experience. Given the small number of families that the area was intending to pilot SEN DPs with, they did not anticipate promoting SEN DPs very actively at this stage.

6.26 Face-to-face methods were reported to be more effective than providing written information. For example, one area which had written to around 400 families about a personal transport budget had received fewer than 20 replies. It will be interesting to see if this remains the case as more families are approached in the autumn.

Establishing demand for SEN Direct Payments

- 6.27 One of the key issues for the pilot is to establish whether there will be demand from families to take up the offer of SEN Direct Payments. By August 2012, the monitoring data showed that around 120 families and young people had been invited to participate in the SEN DP pilot from across 10 areas and seven families and young people had opted to take-up a SEN DP. During the case study visits, we asked areas about their future intentions in terms of promoting SEN DPs.
- 6.28 Looking forward, most case study areas were not yet clear about how many families they would invite to participate in the SEN DP pilot. Six were able to provide estimates for the number of families that they expected to have approached by October 2012. These estimates ranged from 4 to 500, reflecting the different approaches taken by individual areas: with small numbers reflecting the targeting of very particular families, who were often unsatisfied with their existing service package; and large numbers coming from a roll out of personal transport budgets or an approach to a whole school year group or in receipt of a key funding stream.
- 6.29 At this stage in the pilot most case study areas had no indication of the possible demand for or take-up of SEN DPs, reflecting that the offer itself has not yet been fully determined. This lack of information about demand poses a major challenge for the areas, which were reluctant to invest in large scale system change when they do not know what the demand will be, but find it difficult to establish what demand will be without investing significant resource to develop an offer that can be made to

families. Developing the offer requires a disaggregation of budgets and a resource allocation approach, which are fixed costs regardless of numbers. It may be that in the time available areas adopt a fairly low-tech approach, based around estimating the costs of current support.

Reasons that families opted to receive a SEN DP

- 6.30 In the case of direct payments for personal transport budgets (PTBs), one area that had been offering PTBs for a while reported that families had been attracted by the increased flexibility. PTBs allowed parents to fit school transport in with work and other commitments, giving them more control over how they managed their time. Parents had also reported that taking their child to school offered them more contact with school staff. In one case, it had shortened the journey time which meant that the child was not as tired when they arrived at school.
- 6.31 More generally, the staff interviewed felt that it was too early to say why families had opted to receive a SEN DP, however, they offered some initial perspectives of their own:
- Direct Payments could offer **greater flexibility** and were viewed to be particularly attractive for those who had previously expressed dissatisfaction with the support package on offer. They were expected to **offer more choice and control**. Professionals also hoped that they would help to build up an understanding of resource and service constraints
 - One area felt that DPs were seen to be most attractive for those families in receipt of therapy services. Over recent years there had been a dramatic increase in the number of techniques available and a SEN DP was seen to offer parents **access to a range of techniques which the local authority was unable to offer**
 - One area thought that DPs generally (i.e. not just for education) were more popular with middle class parents, who felt **confident about commissioning** a support package on behalf of their child. School staff did not anticipate a large number of families opting for SEN DPs as they thought some parents/carers would not want the **additional financial responsibility**.

Reasons that families may/had opted not to receive a SEN DP

- 6.32 Staff thought that families would be less likely to take up a SEN DP if they were happy with existing services. They perceived that while personal budgets appealed to many families who had a good understanding of their social care needs, there was some doubt as to whether this would also be the case for education services. The Project Manager in one area perceived that **parents tended to feel that schools and teachers 'know best' in education terms** what was best for their children and thus would be less likely to request changes. The view was expressed that while some families might want a greater degree of involvement in the process of decision making, they might also say that they trusted the school to continue to provide for their child in the way they saw fit.

Engagement of schools and colleges

- 6.33 Engaging schools and colleges was identified as a major challenge by local authority staff, particularly in relation to encouraging them to disaggregate funding. Reforms taking place in education policy areas were felt to have led to reluctance to engage with what some educational professionals regard as a peripheral matter.
- 6.34 Ten of the case study areas had begun engaging schools, and three had also begun engaging colleges. The low level of engagement with colleges was indicative of areas largely focusing on school level children initially, rather than post-16. Schools had been engaged through a variety of means. In some cases, areas had taken a targeted approach, speaking to individual head teachers or small groups of schools about possible involvement in the SEN DP pilot. Other areas had opted for a wider approach, with one area holding a conference and another holding a meeting to introduce SEN DPs to local schools. Engagement of colleges had also been based on a targeted approach and discussions here were still at a very early stage.
- 6.35 The response so far from schools and colleges has been mixed. During the case study visits, six of the ten areas that had begun engaging schools were able to provide details of how many schools had been approached to-date. Three areas had opted to initially target a small number of institutions which they had identified as likely to engage well with the SEN DP pilot. In these cases, the areas had received a broadly positive response and the schools and colleges had agreed to sign-up to the pilot. The areas which put out a more general request to schools had received 5-10 expressions of interest.

- 6.36 Two areas noted that older, mainstream schools tended to be more interested in SEN DPs than newer schools (which often had greater proportions of their funding delegated to them). In contrast, another area found that securing engagement from mainstream schools had been harder than securing engagement special schools because the former tend to have less experience of personalisation and person centred planning.
- 6.37 Where local authorities had taken a broader approach and contacted a wider range of education providers, they usually found a few schools were interested and agreed to explore the possibility of offering SEN DPs to their students. However, the majority of institutions had a variety of concerns about SEN DPs and were reluctant to actively engage at this stage. These concerns are explored further below.

Progress of SEN DP only areas in developing the Common Delivery Framework for the Pilot

- 6.38 The SEN DP only areas (i.e. the former IB areas) were not involved with the wider SEND Pathfinder, which commenced in October 2011. Whilst the SEND Pathfinder areas have been developing processes associated with single plans and personal budgets across education, health and social care for at least ten months, the SEN DP pilot only began in January 2012.
- 6.39 Similar to the Pathfinder areas, monitoring data is being collected on the SEN DP only areas' progress against the various elements of the Common Delivery Framework (CDF) for the pilot. The first set of monitoring returns (covering progress up until the end of June 2012) showed that, overall, the SEN DP only sites tended to have fairly advanced ideas on what they might pilot based on their previous experience, but were at an earlier stage than the SEND Pathfinder sites in terms of the wider infrastructure covered by the CDM (probably reflecting that they had received funding support at a later point).
- 6.40 Whilst the SEN DP only areas have drawn on learning from their experiences during the IB pilots, there appears to have been a drop in momentum in some cases when they did not secure Pathfinder funding. Staffing and organisational changes have also meant that SEN DP only areas are starting the pilot from a different base than the Pathfinder areas. Only one area had the full project development team in place (in this case, the team was already established prior to the Pilot). Across the five areas, three had designated Project Managers in place, of which two were continuing from the IB pilot. A fourth area, at 'early stage development', was initially using staff

that had previously been funded through the IB grant to lead one element of the work and SEN staff to lead another. The fifth area was in the process of recruiting for a full time Project Manager. Whilst the IB project lead (based within the social care team) was also involved with the SEN DP pilot, the local authority had decided to recruit for a new post for this pilot, with the post holder to be based within education.

Risks and challenges

- 6.41 A number of risks and challenges associated with SEN DPs were identified through the case studies. These are discussed further in Table 12. It is important to note that most of these are based on the perceptions of staff, rather than from evidence based on actual experiences. It is for the pilots to test how far any of these concerns are realised, and if so how the risks can be mitigated.

Table 12: Risks and challenges identified through the case study visits

Identified risk/challenge	
Implications for commissioning and equality of services	<p>At the present time, many of the services offered to SEND families are purchased by the local authorities as part of block contracts. The cost of some support reduces through single purchasing, for example where a family rather than the council books a taxi to take their child to school. In other areas, without the economies of scale arising from large scale procurement, the cost of support could increase</p> <p>Similarly, schools currently use their budgets to put in place resources or support that may be to the particular benefit of children with specific needs, but that can also be accessed by other children. They were concerned that the financial sustainability of some services could be placed at risk if too many families were to opt out of existing provision and choose to reallocate their direct payment elsewhere. For example, if a family decided to employ their own Teaching Assistant (TA) for their child, a school might not be able to continue funding a TA that currently supports a number of children in the classroom, or the school would have less flexibility to vary the inputs of TA to specific pupils at times when it was most needed</p>
Developing the provider market	<p>A key barrier to the success of SEN DPs was the time it would take to ensure that the provider market is developed to the point at which a real choice is offered to families and young people.</p>
Implications for resource planning	<p>SEN DPs were expected to create challenges for schools, colleges and local authorities when it comes to future planning of staffing and services, as they would be unsure about their future budgets depending on which families took up a DP</p>
A lack of staff capacity	<p>The local authorities were experiencing challenges due to restructuring and capacity was identified as a common issue across the pilot areas. A lack of staff capacity meant it was harder to hold effective discussions with families and provide adequate support throughout the process. At a school level, staff also identified a need for increased resourcing, to enable them to take on commissioning/marketing roles associated with SEN DPs</p>
Skills gaps amongst staff	<p>Over the long term it was felt the personalisation agenda (and SEN DPs) will assist the gradual transformation of the role of local authorities from service delivery to commissioning organisations. This was expected to have a large impact on the required skillset of staff</p>
Skills gaps amongst	<p>Concerns were raised that many parents might not have the necessary experience or knowledge to make the best use of their budget or to undertake effective commissioning roles. Schools argued that this could lead to inappropriate spending</p>

Identified risk/challenge	
parents	taking place. Furthermore, as discussed above, there may be occasions where support packages will not always continue to be affordable if purchased on an individual basis. Where parents and carers could potentially solve this problem by coming together and brokering their own support there was concern that not all parents would be able to do so. New support systems might be required to ensure that such arrangements are brokered effectively and there will be an important role to play for the local authorities in monitoring the use of SEN DPs
Impact on the	There is a risk that the need to negotiate with parents over the deployment of a direct payment could be detrimental to the traditional relationship that parents have with their child's school. In addition, if parents are using a SEN DP to fund a Teaching Assistant, they may want a say in the recruitment of that staff member. Conversely, one area thought that SEN DPs offered the opportunity to improve the parent-school relationship. For example, if the family is able to get in direct contact with their Teaching Assistant as opposed to with the school when having issues, it may help to resolve issues more quickly
Impact on day-	<p>One area voiced concerns that there may be implications for the day-to-day operations of the school. For example, if lots of families took up personal transport budgets and decided to drive their child to school instead of using the school bus, it could result in a large number of vehicles coming on to the school at the start and end of the day</p> <p>Questions were raised about accountability. For example, who would be responsible for monitoring a support worker paid for by parent? One consultee anticipated that schools/colleges would be anxious about bringing in people that aren't directly employed by the school/college</p>
Challenges	<p>In specific relation to PTBs, a number of issues were raised in relation to adverse impacts that could arise. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would a PTB act as a deterrent for a young person to ever travel independently?• Would a PTB adversely affect attendance at school?• The general policy of councils is to reduce the number of vehicles on the road., PTB's have the opposite effect., e.g. instead of a few minibuses taking children to school, all children could be travelling individually in separate vehicles• If the pilot did not work the capacity of mini bus companies and willingness to provide could be reduced.

Source: SQW case study visits

Summary

6.42 Table 13 presents a summary of the key points from this chapter.

Table 13: Summary of progress made against SEN DPs

- Areas were exploring a range of budgets for possible inclusion in SEN DP offers, with most initially focusing on the inclusion of transport budgets since they were viewed as relatively straightforward to disaggregate
- There was general uncertainty about what else might be piloted with a few approaches targeting year groups or starting from either families with support and seeing if any element would be disaggregated; or families who appeared dissatisfied and seeing if a direct payment could provide flexibility to enable them to find a more satisfactory solution
- Most areas were at an early stage in relation to raising awareness about SEN DPs with prospective families and recruiting them to the pilot. At this stage in the pilot, there was little indication of what the possible take-up of SEN DPs was likely to be from families.
- Ten of the case study areas had begun engaging schools and three had also begun engaging colleges. Responses to-date had been mixed and initial indications were that a relatively small number of schools and colleges were likely to engage with the SEN DP pilot at this stage
- Areas and education providers identified a range of challenges and risks associated with SEN DPs. These included concerns around commissioning and equality of provision, skills and capacity gaps, and the implications for resource planning.

Next steps

6.43 Further fieldwork with the case study areas will take place during October and November, with focus groups with families due to take place in January and February 2013. The next stage of the research will look at the progress made by areas in developing their SEN DP offering as well as the emerging evidence in relation to demand for SEN DP.

7: Conclusions and implications

7.1 This final chapter sets out the emerging findings to date and the associated implications. It then concludes with the next steps and key risks for the evaluation.

Evaluation objectives

7.2 Table 14 sets out the four key objectives for the evaluation and our reflections on progress against each of these. It shows that it is still too early to draw conclusions on the key research questions as we await a sufficient number of families experiencing the new processes. That said, many of the routes to impact anticipated in the March 2012 Quarterly Evaluation Report remain, reflecting that the Pathfinders are continuing to move in the direction anticipated at that time. The answers to these questions as they emerge in time could have significant implications for future local authority planning.

Table 14: Reflections on progress and emerging issues against the evaluation objectives

objective	
<p>Make the current support system for disabled children and young people and those with SEN and their parents or carer more transparent, less adversarial and less bureaucratic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a family-centred assessment and planning pathway, key working and single plan document is expected to improve understanding and communication and reduce adversarial incidents between professionals and families • Improvements in multi-agency working should also increase the transparency across service areas, which may lead to wider benefits around sharing resources and reduced duplication of effort, but may also bring uncertainties about responsibilities across agencies in to greater focus • Fewer areas than expected moving towards a single assessment, with more emphasis placed on streamlined review through summarising existing assessments. The development of the summary may add rather than take away bureaucracy. However, developing and writing a single plan should reduce bureaucracy in the event that it formally replaces existing service-specific plans and the process of agreement across agencies is fairly smooth
<p>Increase real choice and control, and improve outcomes, for families from a range of backgrounds with disabled children and young people and those who have special educational needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a family-centred and multi-agency assessment and planning pathway, key working and the local offer should support the achievement of this objective • Expectation that the single planning process will lead to better outcomes and impacts • Single planning likely to either involve all professionals attending a single meeting with the family or the family working with a coordinator who seeks bilateral inputs from professionals – the evaluation will seek to assess the effectiveness of the approaches and whether they produce different results • Successful delivery of the new approaches to planning, described above will be dependent on the extent to which they are truly family-centred and adopted on a multi-agency basis, which remains to be seen

Evaluation objective	
<p>Introduce greater independence into the assessment process by using the voluntary sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would appear that none of the areas were planning to use the VCS to undertake assessments. However, some areas are intended to use the VCS to support delivery of the key working function which may include: reviews, coordination of existing information, single planning and advocacy for families and young people • Increased independence or perceived independence may therefore come through the key working function / the family being more directly involved, which will be tracked by the evaluation
<p>Demonstrate value for money, by looking at the cost of reform and associated benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable amount of change is envisaged, which is likely to require substantial time inputs both to design the new approaches and then to ensure that all those involved have the necessary skills to act as envisaged. This includes staff time to bring about new ways of working and capacity building for external organisations • Addition of the key worker role is likely to add cost to the system, either through costs of the service being contracted out, or due to displacement of tasks from existing staff to take on the key worker role. However, this cost may be outweighed if the inputs to the single plan are less than the sum of inputs to multiple plans

Source: SQW

Programme progress

- 7.3 Having reached the half-way stage of the 18 month Programme, the majority of Pathfinder areas had reached the end of their initial set-up phase and were part-way through developing the infrastructure required to deliver the new approaches. As would be expected, some areas have advanced more quickly than others. That said, some of the areas which appear slow to recruit families have sought to develop their new approaches before doing so, while other areas have tried to develop their approaches as they take the first families through.
- 7.4 Emerging findings against each theme of the CDF are presented below.

Organisational engagement and cultural change

- 7.5 **Nearly all Pathfinder areas had successfully set up governance structures and delivery teams, and had developed a set of local objectives for their Pathfinder.** Moreover, there appeared to have been **broad strategic involvement in Pathfinder governance structures** from across most parties by June 2012. A common group of stakeholders continued to be prominent in the governance of most Pathfinders including: professionals from Local Authority education and children's services, and Parent Carer Forums/representatives, health, adult care, schools and the local VCS.
- 7.6 However, although the majority of stakeholders were now effectively engaged on the Pathfinder Governance Boards, **representation from health remained an issue for**

many, which was perceived to be caused by a lack of capacity amongst the health professionals to support developments aligned to some apparently viewing the Pathfinder as a low priority.

- 7.7 **Although most areas had engaged the VCS at a strategic level, evidence from the case studies illustrated that a number of areas remained uncertain about the purpose and role they could and should play in the Pathfinder.** Options had included the VCS supporting the delivery of the key working function, advocacy for families/young children and provision of support/services. However, areas were still considering which if any of these options to take forward.
- 7.8 **The engagement of children and young people in the development of the local Pathfinders remained very limited.** As a result children and young people would have limited influence on the initial approaches being trialled.
- 7.9 Further analysis of the self-reported data indicated that areas that had project development teams in place were more likely to have made more progress: developing the infrastructure required to deliver the Pathfinder; developing and delivering change management processes; and raising awareness and recruiting families and young people to take part in the Pathfinder. This highlights the importance of having sufficient dedicated resource in place.
- 7.10 Most areas had begun to develop their change management processes and some had subsequently progressed to delivering these. However, the pace of progress appeared slow, which is likely to reflect:
- The complex nature of the changes Pathfinder areas have been tasked to trial
 - The starting point of individual areas, some of which had further to travel than others
 - The continuous nature of change management - which had generally begun with small-scale training and development for those professionals that had been identified to work with Pathfinder families. It would then need to be widened in terms of content (to reflect the learning from the early cases) and coverage (to ensure multi-agency professionals at all levels were able to take the new approaches forward over the longer term).
- 7.11 **The majority of social care, specialist health and SEN services reported they had committed staff time to support the development of the Pathfinder** through attending meetings, planning sessions, etc. However, all appeared **less willing to**

commit money for development or service provision (for the single plans). This arrangement is unlikely to be problematic in the short-term as areas find their feet during the development of their initial set of single plans. However, it may prove challenging over the longer-term as areas may need to provide funding to support the roll out of the Pathfinder approach, which could for example include all partners/agencies contributing funding to support the delivery of the wide-scale change management that will be required.

- 7.12 **Progress in developing the local offer has been mixed.** While around one third of areas have moved ahead, most areas reported that they were at early stage development as they were still working through the complexities of how to engage providers effectively to support this development. These latter areas were therefore unlikely to publish a completed local offer by the end of December 2012, as specified in the Pathfinder invitation to tender.

Engaging and involving families and young people

- 7.13 Most areas were part way through their activities to raise awareness amongst families and young people by the end of June 2012. As a consequence, **most areas had begun recruiting families and young people to participate in their Pathfinder.**
- 7.14 **By mid-August 2012, 20 of the Pathfinder areas had recruited a total of 313 families and young people¹³.** This included one area that had recruited almost a quarter of the total Pathfinder families and young people, implying that the other 19 areas had recruited an average of only 10 families and young people to date.
- 7.15 Recruitment to date had included children and young people from across the 0-25 age range and spectrum of special educational needs. However, **recruitment of young people aged 19+ years remained somewhat lower than other age groups**, implying that testing for this age group may be limited. The data also indicated that **there was likely to be a bias towards families that were already accessing services**, which could cause replicability and scalability issues depending on the requirements for transition to a new system, as different approaches may be required for both newcomers and existing service users.

¹³ 313 families have consented to take part in the evaluation and been entered into the SQW Pathfinder monitoring tool, which is likely to slightly under-represent the total numbers of families and young people that have been recruited.

- 7.16 **The pace and scale of recruitment across the Pathfinder areas to date was lower than indicated at the time of scoping**, which was likely to reflect the length of set-up required to deliver the complex set of Pathfinder requirements. In addition, many of the areas that had recruited during the Summer school term planned to recruit a larger set of families and young people in the Autumn term. The majority of these families were unlikely to have completed their single plans to meet the current parent-carer survey deadline, implying that the evaluation will only be able to gather a limited set of family based impact information.

Setting up the infrastructure

- 7.17 Progress against the setting up the infrastructure theme of the CDF was mixed. Most encouraging was that **many areas had either fully or partially mapped out their single assessment and plan pathway, with a number also having developed a single plan template**. Overall, those that had made more progress tended to be the areas that had a full project development team in place, signalling the need for dedicated resource.
- 7.18 The development of a local assessment and single planning pathway had included consideration of assessment/review, planning and the single plan document. Emerging evidence indicated that these pathways were more commonly expected to consist of:
- Assessments - a set of assessments by different agencies being brought together (which was the chosen approach in the majority of the areas) OR a single assessment episode supplemented by ad hoc specialist assessments OR an initial assessment by one agency, systematically topped up by other agencies, all of which would be multi-agency and outcomes-based
 - Planning – single planning events and the use of a planning coordinator to create the plan with the family and liaise with professionals from relevant agencies to obtain their input.
- 7.19 This set of assessment and planning intentions confirmed that most areas intended to recruit families that were already in the system and implied that they were focusing on **streamlining the review as opposed to the assessment process**. It also implied that areas were seeking to make significant changes to existing planning processes to **bring about a more family-centred and multi-agency approach**.

- 7.20 Although most areas had developed an assessment and single planning pathway, they tended to have more **concrete ideas about the format and content of their single plan document or template**. Although this may relate to the fact that areas intended to grow the assessment and planning process during the trials with families and young people, existing evidence¹⁴ has shown that the planning process itself is likely to make the most difference. Therefore it will be important that this element is sufficiently resourced and undertaken by people with suitable skills.
- 7.21 **The resourcing and accountability of the plan had usually not been fully considered**. Although some Pathfinders had ideas about how this might work, these were often at an early stage, or not yet formally agreed. This had left several important questions unanswered as to how far the plan that is developed would actually be delivered. This included: how actions would be assigned to agencies; what happens in the event that any one agency does not agree to deliver a particular part of the plan; how actions would be funded; how the single plans would be signed off; and who would ensure each element of the plan was delivered.
- 7.22 **Areas that had made good progress developing an assessment and planning pathway also tended to be at an advanced stage of considering how to coordinate and deliver their new approach**. This had included consideration of the skills and capacity that would be required to deliver effective key working and had led most of the case study areas to look to use existing staff to resource this aspect of the Pathfinder.
- 7.23 **Limited progress had been made around the development of personal budgets and IT resources by the end of June 2012**. In the former case it appeared that many areas may be waiting to complete some plans before taking this forward. However, this will mean that the money has not been part of the planning process and that often the personal budget will reflect only those parts of the package that can be most readily disaggregated. Moreover, given the timescales of the Programme, this approach is unlikely to lead to widespread testing of personal budgets. In the latter case, the majority of areas intended to rely on paper based or secure email methods for sharing information in the short-term, as the small scale nature of the majority of the Pathfinders did not warrant significant IT-related investments. Again, although this approach may be acceptable in the short-term,

¹⁴ SQW (2010, 2011, 2012) Evaluation of the Individual Budgets for Families with Disabled Children Pilot Programme, DH (2010) Evaluation of the Adult Individual Budgets Programme and DfE (2011) Achievement for All

areas will need to begin to consider how to address the issue over the longer-term following roll out of the Pathfinder approaches.

Safeguarding and risk management

- 7.24 Most areas had begun to review the relevant safeguarding procedures by June 2012 or reported that they had them in place prior to becoming a Pathfinder. However, most had made only limited progress. Further consideration of this theme and its links to the recommendations made in the recent Munro Review of Child Protection¹⁵, which also included the development of a single plan in social care, should be undertaken over the coming months.

SEN DPs

- 7.25 Much of the evidence around SEN DPs is similar to the wider Pathfinder programme. **Areas were still at a relatively early stage in terms of developing a SEN DP offering** and were exploring a range of budgets for possible inclusion in SEN DP offers, although this was generally quite exploratory. Most had chosen to **focus initially on transport** budgets as they were viewed as relatively straightforward to disaggregate. In addition, rather than focusing on specific budgets, **a few areas had opted to identify individual families that they thought might benefit from a SEN DP**. For this latter group, the SEN DP was sometimes viewed as offering an alternative solution where the current system had not satisfied the family or young person.
- 7.26 The work around budget streams (except transport) and individual families is likely to mean that **fairly small numbers of families are offered an SEN DP in the evaluation period**. Most areas were at an early stage in relation to raising awareness about SEN DPs with prospective families and recruiting them to the pilot and so did not have a strong indication of likely take up. However, there was some concern that many families might not want a DP, choosing instead to trust the school to make appropriate choices.
- 7.27 Ten of the case study sites had begun engaging schools and three had also begun engaging colleges. Responses to-date had been mixed and initial indications were that **a relatively small number of schools and colleges were likely to engage** with the SEN DP pilot during the pilot time period.

¹⁵ DfE (2011) The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report

7.28 Both pilot staff and education providers **identified a range of challenges and risks** associated with SEN DPs, which the pilot can test and seek to overcome. Among the key concerns at this stage were:

- Concerns about commissioning and management of resources, due to a loss of control in the school and a loss of economies of scale
- The knock on impact on other pupils if (say) a teaching assistant was dedicated to one pupil, but did not then contribute to the wider class environment
- A lack of skills amongst staff and parents to develop and facilitate the offer, and a lack of providers to offer the choices parents might want at the price level the budget would support.

7.29 The similarities between the Pathfinder programme and the SEN DP specific element mean that the implications that we set out below apply to both areas of activity.

Issues arising

7.30 Although the Pathfinder areas have done well in setting up structures and plans and therefore appear to have the right things in place to move forward, this has not necessarily led to progress of the scale or speed anticipated at the time of scoping across all elements of the CDF. These challenges appeared to reflect both resource constraints and difficulties in thinking through and developing new approaches. Therefore, it may be helpful to provide more explicit guidance and direction on those elements where more limited progress has been made. This could include:

- Anticipated coverage of the **local offer** and expected date of publication
- How far **single assessment** needs to be tested given the suggested bias at present towards streamlined review and then plan, rather than changing the assessment process for those coming new to the system
- How far **whole pathways with families that have not previously accessed services** need to be tested given the current bias towards the recruitment of families that are already using services
- Coverage and expectations around **personal budgets**.

7.31 It may also be useful to provide additional support to those areas that remained at early stage development against many of the elements of the CDF at the end of June

2012, to understand why development has been slow and what could be done to speed up progress. In the absence of support these areas may not benefit as much as others from the 18 month Pathfinder period.

7.32 There is also a high risk that:

- Family-led processes are introduced which provide families and young people with more choice and control but insufficient market development is undertaken to provide any real choice in service/support provision, leaving families empowered yet frustrated
- Personal budgets become more of a money management mechanism than an integral part of the Pathfinder assessment and planning pathway
- In the absence of sufficient Government direction, multi-agency working sees some improvement during the Pathfinder Programme and then drops back to the default position post this period. Much rests on the proposals for joint commissioning to overcome this risk.

7.33 The Pathfinders were expected to provide examples for other local authorities to follow. Only a small number of areas are fully considering system change including service integration (which for others was not seen as an option). In most cases the Pathfinders were developing small scale trials which may not be easily rolled out to achieve whole system change. These areas would then require a further period of development beyond the current programme.

7.34 This staged development process raises an issue for non-Pathfinder areas which may be looking to learn from the Pathfinders. The non-Pathfinders may be able to take the principles and learning and implement them more quickly than the Pathfinders. However, this could still be through starting at a fairly small scale and building practice over time in advance of any widespread change. Conversely, if they adopt a whole scale change approach, the extent of evidence from the Pathfinders will be built from a small number of cases which have in part been developed over several years preceding the Pathfinder. The timescale implications of either of the approaches to change will require careful consideration by DfE as part of the transitional arrangements to the new system.

Implications for the evaluation

7.35 The current pace of progress and associated recruitment of families and young people is behind that expected at scoping and unlikely to provide sufficient evidence

to provide comprehensive responses to the four evaluation objectives within the 18-month evaluation timescale. This could limit the extent to which the findings can inform any transitional process. Unless current recruitment profiles can be increased or the evaluation timetable extended, it may be the case that the evaluation can only report the Pathfinder approaches that have been developed with only limited comment on their effectiveness, covering:

- The satisfaction and experience of families and young people that participate in the initial Pathfinder trials (i.e. that have completed single plans by the end of October 2012) but not fully capturing the experiences of families who go through later waves of planning (which may be a more typical experience as the new systems move towards steady state and the families become more uniformly typical of the population). The analysis would most likely be at an aggregate level, with insufficient numbers to comment on different sub-groups such as those experiencing different approaches or from different family backgrounds
- Qualitative data collected from the case study research, involving Pathfinder teams, stakeholders and participating families and young people, covering the set-up and delivery stage
- Partial cost information, which is likely to be robust only around the set-up phase as opposed to the delivery of the new approaches to families (reflecting the limited throughput of families).

Next outputs from the evaluation

7.36 The final two evaluation update reports are due to be submitted to the DfE at the end of December 2012 and April 2013. The December Quarterly 2012 report will include:

- Headline findings on progress against the CDF to the end of October, based on the third monitoring submissions from the Pathfinders
- Progress with and learning from implementation from a set of short catch up telephone calls with the case study areas
- An account of the emerging barriers and challenges faced by the Pathfinder areas
- An update on SEN DPs, and emerging feedback on how developments are working out at local level

- Some initial feedback gathered through a small number of qualitative case studies undertaken with families and young people participating in the Pathfinder and some headline findings about outcomes from the parent-carer survey.

7.37 The final evaluation report will include an overview of the results gathered over the course of the evaluation, including the monitoring data, parent-carer survey, family case studies, area-based case studies and staff work and satisfaction survey.

Support

7.38 The evaluation team would be happy to answer any queries you may have about the research. Please direct all queries to SENDpathfinder@sgw.co.uk and we will ensure that the appropriate member of the team comes back to you.

Annex A: Our approach to the Pathfinder evaluation

- A.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation, as set out in the Terms of Reference are detailed in Table A-1.

Table A-1: Aims and objectives of the evaluation

Aims

- To establish whether the Pathfinders:
- Increase real choice and control, and improve outcomes, for families from a range of backgrounds with disabled children and young people and those who have special educational needs
- Make the current support system for disabled children and young people and those with SEN and their parents or carers more transparent, less adversarial and less bureaucratic
- Introduce greater independence into the assessment process by using the voluntary sector
- Demonstrate value for money, by looking at the cost of reform and associated benefits

Objectives

- Establish the impact of the Pathfinders, particularly in relation to the main aims identified above, on disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs and their families; and on the service providers and organisations in the public, private and the voluntary and community sectors
- Assess the effectiveness of the models developed and used by the pathfinders and make recommendations based on best practice and value for money
- Test the impact of changes to the system across core and optional elements as described in the *Pathfinder Specification and Application pack*
- Undertake a full cost-benefit analysis of the set-up, introduction, implementation of the Pathfinder activities, and how this affects service providers and organisations in the public, private and the voluntary and community sectors
- Establish whether rolling out the policy would be cost-effective, and how it would affect service providers, commissioners, communities and the likely costs to Government
- Establish the barriers to delivery and how these might be overcome including advice on any legislative barriers and any conflicting Government priorities
- Identify and draw out the implications and actions that Government will need to consider to enable the successful implementation of a new assessment and single plan
- Investigate the links between the Pathfinders and other cross- Government programmes and activities, for example, the impact of the NHS reforms, to see if children's services can be delivered in a more integrated manner.

Evaluation of the support team

- Establish if the service provided by the Pathfinder Support Team
- Provides the necessary support to meet the needs of the Pathfinders, and is timely, relevant and proportionate
- Provides the range of professional expertise and experience to deliver the required level of support to the Pathfinders
- Is effective in the identification, validation and sharing of good practice across Pathfinders
- Has facilitated Pathfinder development and used local expertise and networking to develop relationships, delivery systems, processes and joint working
- Has supported the development of local leadership to facilitate the sustainability of the Pathfinder

Aims

- programme over time
- Represents value for money
- Review how any future expansion of the Pathfinder programme might be supported (or not) in the future.

Source: *Evaluation Terms of Reference*

A.2 To summarise, the evaluation is capturing evidence on:

- The **process involved in setting up and delivering** the Pathfinder – to understand what has changed in terms of the assessment, planning and support process
- The resultant **outputs, outcomes and impacts**¹⁶ that are experienced by families and agencies – to understand what has worked, for whom, in what context and why
- The effectiveness of the Pathfinder Support Team.

Four strands of work

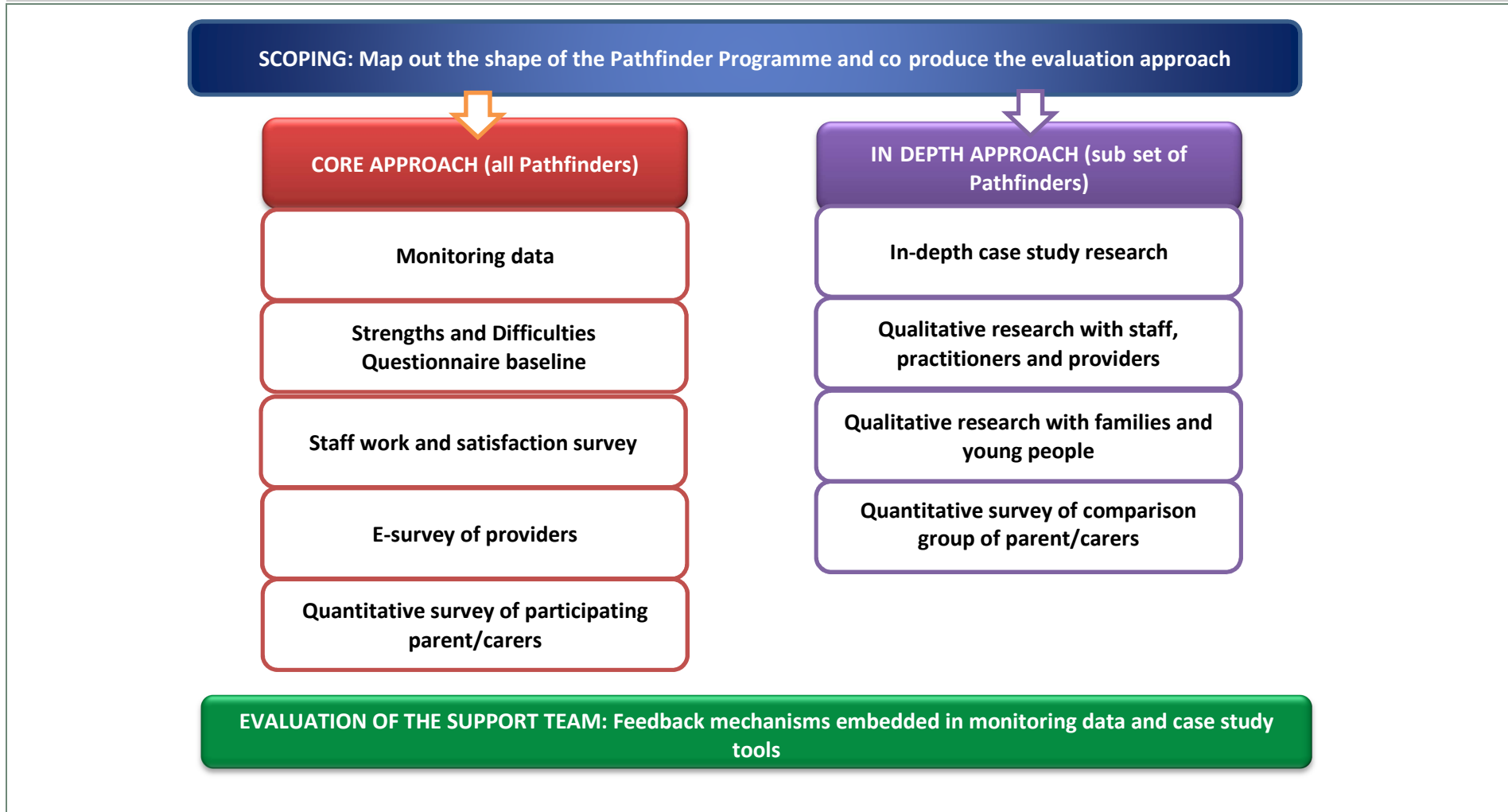
A.3 The evaluation work programme was divided into four strands:

- **Scoping** – to map the shape of the Pathfinder Programme and enable co-production of the final evaluation approach
- **Core approach** – a series of core tools have been developed to gather information from all Pathfinder areas, as a means of understanding the progress made across the Programme
- **In-depth approach** – alongside the core approach a complementary set of tools have been developed for use in a sub-set of ten Pathfinder areas, as a means of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the differing Pathfinder approaches and to gather lessons learned through staff, stakeholder and family perceptions of their experiences
- **Evaluation of the support team** – feedback mechanisms have been embedded within the suite of research tools to facilitate a continuous review of the activities of the support team.

¹⁶ Outputs are defined as the direct and immediate effects of the Pathfinder, that can be monitored during the Programme; Outcomes are defined as changes in the behaviour, capacity and performance of the families, professionals and other organisations that participate and/or are involved in the Pathfinder; and Impacts are defined as the effects that the Pathfinder outcomes have in improving high level and longer term change on those directly and indirectly involved in the Programme.

- A.4 The Terms of Reference also stated that the evaluation approach should seek to set up a means of tracking the outcomes and impacts of the Programme over the longer term. These methods would subsequently be used if the Programme and the evaluation are extended beyond the original 18 month timescale. Therefore, the evaluation approach has been designed to ensure that appropriate baseline information is collected within the current Programme timeframe.
- A.5 Table A-2 provides a detailed illustration of the research tools that are being used in each of the strands of work. More detail on each of the tools and the case study selection process and subsequent approach can be found in the *Evaluation Briefing Report*, which is available at <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/sen/b0075291/green-paper/evaluation>.

Table A-2: The evaluation approach



Source: SQW

The evaluation framework

- A.6 Given the overarching aims of the evaluation – with their focus on understanding the process involved in setting up and delivering the Pathfinder and what has worked, for whom, in what context and why – we developed a two stranded evaluation framework, made up of the following components:
- One which is seeking to assess the process of setting up and delivering the Pathfinder approach (referred to as the *process and delivery framework*)
 - And the second, which is seeking to assess the resultant outcomes that are experienced by families and service/support providers (referred to as the *family and provider journey*).
- A.7 The framework, which is detailed in *The Evaluation Briefing Report*, sets out a set of research questions that the evaluation is seeking to explore and the methods that will be used to gather the relevant information. It also provides a structure to ensure that the effects of the Pathfinders are considered at all stages of the impact logic chain. This includes specific elements to cover the outcomes and short and medium-long term impacts that we propose to explore.

The Common Delivery Framework

- A.8 The evaluation of the Individual Budgets Pilot for Families with Disabled Children illustrated the effectiveness of the Common Delivery Model (CDM)¹⁷, which provided a framework to inform and assess the development of the pilots. The CDM was revised for use in the Pathfinder evaluation, where it has been termed *the Common Delivery Framework* (or *the CDF*).
- A.9 The CDF (see Table A-3) has been developed to enable structured data collection and assessment of delivery and costs at different stages of the Pathfinder process. It sets out a series of elements which it is anticipated each Pathfinder will need to address as part of developing its local activity. Progress has been base-lined and is now being tracked and reported against the themes/elements of the CDF.

¹⁷ More information can be found at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-RR145>

Table A-3: The Common Delivery Framework (CDF)

THEME: ORGANISATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL CHANGE

Element	Progress measures
1 – ENGAGEMENT OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Board/Governance structure • A clear set of objectives have been agreed • Development of a project plan • Commitment from social care to share resources to develop and deliver the Pathfinder • Commitment from education to share resources to develop and deliver the Pathfinder • Commitment from health to share resources to develop and deliver the Pathfinder • Designated an overall lead(s) for the Pathfinder • Engagement of the VCS in the development of the Pathfinder • Engagement of parent/carers in the development of the Pathfinder • Engagement of a representation of children and young people in the development of the Pathfinder
2 – RECRUITMENT OF DESIGNATED STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project development team • Designated Project Manager for the Pathfinder
3 – CHANGE MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress developing and delivering of change management process as part of the Pathfinder
4 – MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND THE LOCAL OFFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with provider market during the development of your Pathfinder • Development of the local offer

THEME: ENGAGING AND INVOLVING FAMILIES

5 – AWARENESS RAISING WITH FAMILIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness with prospective families • Recruitment of families and young people to take part in the Pathfinder programme
6 – PEER SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of peer support to the parent/carers participating in the Pathfinder • Delivery of peer support to the children and young people participating in the Pathfinder

TH

7 – MAPPING OF SINGLE ASSESSMENT AND PLAN PATHWAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress developing the assessment and single plan pathway
8 – DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL BUDGETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of a resource and funding mechanism • Support planning • Development of a spectrum of choice for the management of PB funds

Element	Progress measures
9 – COORDINATION AND DELIVERY OF THE PATHFINDER APPROACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on the coordination and delivery of the Pathfinder approach (i.e. the single assessment and plan pathway)
10 – DEVELOPMENT OF IT RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of appropriate management information • Development of appropriate IT application to store assessment/plans • Development of inter-agency information sharing protocols • Gaining family consent for information sharing • Sharing of information between agencies taking place
THEME: SAFEGUARDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
11 – SAFEGUARDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the relevant safeguarding procedures to ensure they are appropriate for the Pathfinder • Communication of the resultant safeguarding procedures to professionals • Communication of the resultant safeguarding procedures to families • Communication of the resultant safeguarding procedures to providers

Source: SQW

Work undertaken to inform the August 2012 Interim Evaluation Report

- A.10 Table A-4 provides a summary of the research that forms the basis of [this report](#)¹⁸, which is described in more detail below.

Table A-4: Research undertaken to inform the August 2012 Interim Evaluation Report

Research Method	Description
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received complete set of monitoring submissions from all Pathfinder areas at the beginning of July 2012, which reported progress made between April and June 2012 • Reviewed the monitoring submissions and undertook a verification exercise with several areas in cases where data anomalies had been identified • Finalised the dataset and undertook an analysis of the data
Case study research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second round case study visits to each of the ten case study areas • Analysis of ten internal case study write ups

¹⁸ A full technical report will be produced to accompany the final suite of evaluation reports, which are due to be submitted to the DfE in April 2013

Monitoring

The monitoring tool

- A.11 The monitoring tool acts as the primary mechanism to gather consistent process, cost and family-related information from each of the Pathfinder areas. Table A-5 presents a summary of the information requirements.
- A.12 The monitoring tool was provided to Pathfinder areas in March 2012 through a secure web-based interface, which enabled:
- Pathfinder areas to securely input the relevant data on an on-going basis
 - Pathfinder areas to export their collated data into CSV format, which can be easily converted into Excel and therefore used locally
 - Automatic secure transfer of the data to the evaluation team, thereby reducing the need to set up additional data sharing mechanisms.
- A.13 As part of the contractual agreement that we as an evaluation team signed with the DfE, we categorised the research related data or information under one of the following groups:
- **Non-confidential** – data or information that has been deemed as unrestricted and can therefore be shared as appropriate
 - **Confidential** – data or information that is deemed as restricted and should therefore only be shared with stipulated individuals and/or organisations within the Pathfinder research team
 - **Sensitive** – data or information that contains personal or sensitive data and should therefore be shared via appropriate and secure means between the relevant parties and subsequently be stored and destroyed using appropriate methods.

Table A-5: Summary of monitoring requirements

Monitoring category		
Financial and in-kind cost information	<p>This tool was designed to provide an assessment of the cost of set up and implementation of each Pathfinder area. This includes <u>annual</u> collation of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial expenditure and in-kind resource required to deliver the Pathfinder • Information on any additional sources of funding that is required to deliver the Pathfinder 	Confidential

Monitoring category	Brief description	Data type
Self-reported progress	<p>This tool was designed to provide a <u>quarterly</u> indication of the process-related development and delivery of each Pathfinder site.</p> <p>Progress is being measured against the Pathfinder Common Delivery Framework (the CDF) which is described below in more detail. The CDF is made up of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational engagement and cultural change • Engaging and involving families • Setting up the infrastructure • Safeguarding and risk management <p>The tool is also providing an indication of the phasing used to develop and implement each element and the length of time it takes to set up.</p>	Confidential
Family registration	<p>This tool is gathering live family registration data to help facilitate the delivery of the parent/carer survey and the analysis of characteristics data</p>	Sensitive
Family tracking	<p>This tool is being used to track individual family progress through the Pathfinder system. This includes information relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date the family signed up to the Pathfinder • Stages of their assessment and single plan pathway • Assessment/ joint planning • Planning (<i>if planning process separate to assessment</i>) • Resource allocation • Continued involvement/ Appeals <p>Information is completed on an iterative basis as the family proceeds through the process</p>	Sensitive
Feedback on the Pathfinder Support Team	<p>This tool is gathering <u>quarterly</u> feedback on the effectiveness of the activities provided to sites by the Pathfinder Support Team</p>	Confidential

Source: SQW

Data collection and analysis for the August 2012 Report

- A.14 This report presents an analysis of the Quarter 1 2012/13 monitoring submissions from all Pathfinder areas. This included self-reported progress data and feedback on the activities delivering by the Pathfinder Support Team between April and June 2012.
- A.15 The data collection and analysis process was undertaken as follows:
- A complete set of secure monitoring submissions were received in early-mid July 2012
 - The data sets were cleaned and a verification exercise was undertaken. Anomalies were identified through a process involving:

- checking whether areas had filled in all relevant fields of the monitoring tool
 - looking for anomalies by comparing responses – for instance where an area’s actual costs were particularly high or low compared to their grant, where an area appeared to have incurred no in kind costs, or where they appeared to have moved backwards (e.g. from having parent/carers engaged in the governance of the Pathfinder to not engaged)
 - reconciling ‘other’ responses into predefined categories as appropriate
 - discussing progress listed in the monitoring data through case study visits
 - following up with monitoring leads directly where recruitment figures didn’t align with the number targeted or understood to have been recruited (by Mott MacDonald or through case study visits)
- Anomalies were discussed with the individual areas by phone or email, and the data was then amended where appropriate. The Frequently Asked Questions document was updated to reflect common issues.
 - The data sets were finalised and a frequency based analysis was undertaken, which is presented in the tables and figures included in the report
 - Cross tabulations of distinct elements of the CDF were also produced to assess whether progress against one element was related to progress made against another element. Cases where links were apparent are noted in the relevant sections of the report.

A.16 In addition, the report presents a snapshot of the live family registration data as of mid-August 2012 (see Chapter 3).

Case study research

The case studies

A.17 Ten case study areas (see Table A-6) were approved by the DfE in January 2012 and work has subsequently been taken forward in these sites¹⁹.

¹⁹ A description of the case study selection process is provided in the *Evaluation Briefing Report*.

Table A-6: Pathfinder case study areas

Calderdale	Lewisham
East Sussex	Manchester
Hampshire	Northamptonshire and Leicester City
Hertfordshire	Solihull
Gateshead	Southampton

Source: SQW

Data collection and analysis for the August 2012 Report

- A.18 A second round of case study visits was undertaken over the course of June and July 2012. The case studies sought to understand the progress that had been made by the areas since the first visit in January/February 2012. This included consultation with a combination of: the Pathfinder Lead & Project Manager, Service managers from children's/adult social care, health and SEN, parent/carer representatives, representatives from the school sector and representatives from the VCS. A checklist of key stakeholder types was developed by SQW and discussions were then held with Pathfinders to identify appropriate individuals.
- A.19 An average of 10 semi-structured face to face consultations was undertaken in each of the ten areas. Table A-7 provides a summary of the type and number of consultations undertaken across all the case study areas.

Table A-7: Summary of the type and number of consultations undertaken

Type of consultee	Number of consultations
Parent/Carer representative	14
Professional from local authority based SEN team	12
Pathfinder Lead	10
Pathfinder Manager	10
Health commissioners	9
Professional from local authority based children's social care team	7
VCS representative	7
School/college representatives	7
Professional from local authority based adult social care team (including transition teams)	6
Operational health professionals	6
Local authority other	5

Type of consultee	consultations
Professionals from local authority based post 16 teams	4
Professional from multi-agency team	3
External consultant	2
TOTAL CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN	102

Source: SQW case study research

- A.20 The consultations were structured to assess progress that had been made against each element of the CDF in terms of what had been achieved, what had worked well and what had worked less well. Feedback on the activities delivered by the Pathfinder Support Team was also discussed.
- A.21 Notes were taken during the consultations and then written summaries of the consultation responses were provided by each of the SQW case study leads following the fieldwork. The set of responses were then assessed alongside the monitoring data to inform the content of this report.

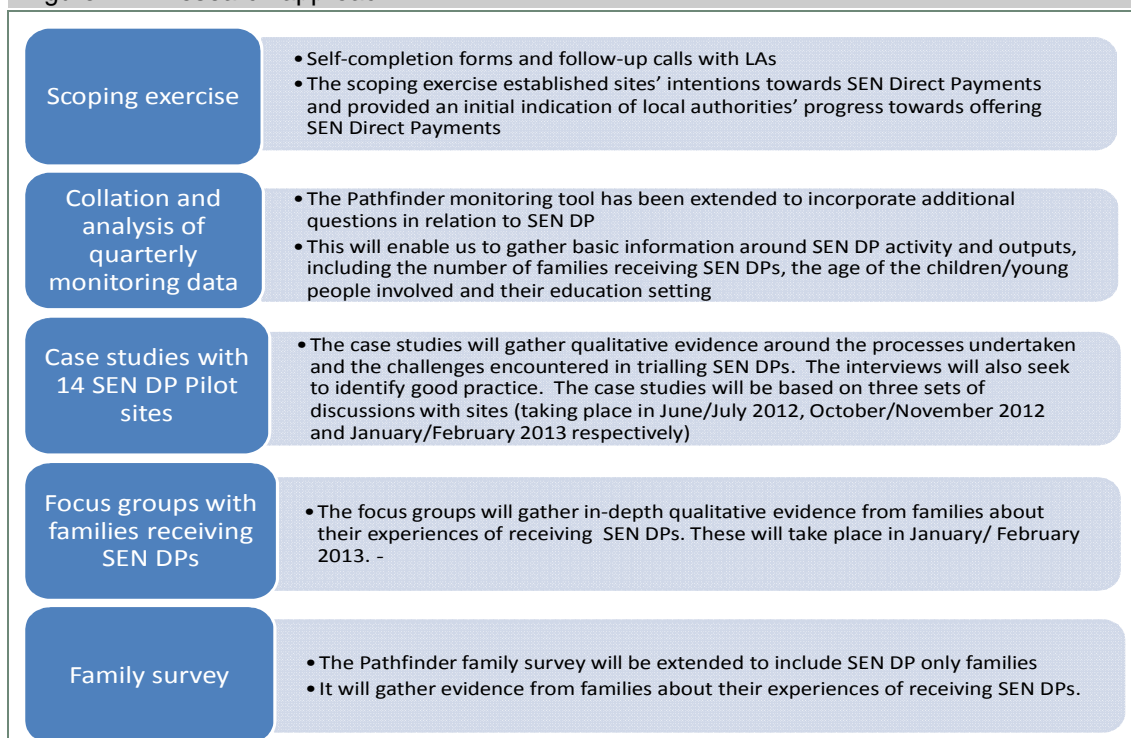
Annex B: SEN DP Pilot Evaluation approach

- B.1 In order to develop the evidence base relating to SEN Direct payments, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned this research as an extension to the wider SEND Pathfinder evaluation. As with the wider Pathfinder evaluation, this piece of research is due to report in April 2013.
- B.2 The SEN DP pilot commenced in January 2012. Given the relatively short time frame available for areas to develop and begin offering SEN Direct Payments it is unlikely that any changes in the well-being of the young person or impact on the wider school will be identifiable through the research. The evaluation is therefore focusing on the development processes and challenges involved in setting up SEN Direct Payments. The aim of the research is to improve the evidence base in relation to:
- The level of demand from families for SEN Direct Payments
 - The practicalities of introducing SEN Direct Payments
 - The implications for wider provision.

Research approach

- B.3 The research approach builds on the wider SEND Pathfinder evaluation, with the Common Delivery Framework again being used to assess the development of the pilot areas. The approach includes a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods, with further details shown in Figure B-1.

Figure B-1: Research approach



Source: SQW

Work undertaken to inform the August 2012 Interim Evaluation Report

B.4 Table B-1 provides a summary of the research that forms the basis of this report, which is described in more detail below.

Table B-1: Research undertaken to inform the August 2012 Interim Evaluation Report

Research method	Description
Scoping Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 36 local authorities covered by the Order were sent a self-completion scoping form and 27 responses were received, covering 31 Local Authorities²⁰ • Follow-up calls were made to a number of areas to clarify points of information or to obtain further details • Analysis of scoping responses and identification of case study areas
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received complete set of monitoring submissions from all SEND Pathfinder areas and the five SEN DP only areas which reported progress made between April and June 2012 • Reviewed the monitoring submissions and undertook a verification exercise with several areas in cases where data anomalies had been identified • Finalised the dataset and undertook an analysis of the data
Case study research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of SEN DP case study visits to each of the 14 case study areas (where relevant, these were combined with the wider SEND Pathfinder case study visits) • Analysis of 14 internal case study write-ups

²⁰ The responses received included four partnership sites where there are two local authorities working jointly on the Pathfinder. In three of these cases, one scoping return was submitted which covered both sites. In the fourth, individual responses were submitted by both local authorities.

Scoping exercise

- B.5 The scoping exercise captured areas' intentions towards SEN Direct Payments and provided an initial indication of local authorities' progress towards offering SEN Direct Payments. It was based on the self-completion scoping forms returned by areas, and the associated follow-up telephone calls.
- B.6 Following the collation of the data, discussions took place with DfE to identify case study areas. The selection process sought to include areas that were focusing on a range of different age groups and budgets as well as providing a geographical spread across the country. Involvement as a case study area was optional for areas, and agreement to participate was secured from 14 areas. These included the following mix:
- 4 existing SEND Pathfinder case study areas
 - 5 SEND Pathfinder areas that are not case study areas for the wider evaluation
 - 5 SEN DP only areas.

Monitoring

- B.7 The Pathfinder monitoring tool was extended to incorporate:
- (i) monitoring submissions from the 5 SEN DP only pilot areas
 - (ii) additional questions in relation to SEN DP for all areas (both SEND Pathfinder and SEN DP only areas).
- B.8 This report presents an analysis of the Quarter 1 2012/13 monitoring submissions from the SEND Pathfinder and the SEN DP pilot areas. The purpose of extending the monitoring tool was to enable us to gather basic information around SEN DP activity and outputs, including the number of families receiving SEN DPs, the age of the children/young people involved and their education setting. The process used to collect and analyse the data was the same as for the wider SEND Pathfinder evaluation (this process is detailed in Annex A of this report).

Case study research

- B.9 The purpose of the case study research is to gather qualitative evidence around the processes undertaken and the challenges encountered in trialling SEN DPs. The interviews also seek to identify good practice so that this can be shared more widely.

- B.10 Fourteen case study areas were approved by the Department for Education in June 2012. The list of case study areas is shown in Table B-2.

Bexley	Essex*	Oldham
Brighton and Hove	Gloucestershire*	Southampton
Coventry*	Manchester	Trafford
Derbyshire*	Newcastle*	Wiltshire
East Sussex	Northamptonshire	Oldham

*Source: SQW *SEN DP only pilot area (i.e. this site is not part of the wider SEND Pathfinder)*

- B.11 The initial round of SEN DP case study consultations was undertaken over the course of June and July 2012. Where areas were already SEND Pathfinder case studies, these visits were combined into one. Consultations in each area included a combination of Pilot Project Managers (where one had been assigned), SEN Service Managers, SEN officers, Educational Psychologists, Head teachers and Deputy Heads, social care and health representatives, commissioning staff and parents/carers. In total, 60 consultations were undertaken across the 14 case study areas.
- B.12 Each SQW case study lead provided a written summary of the consultation responses following the fieldwork. These written summaries were then collated and analysed alongside the monitoring data in order to inform the content of this report.

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