



Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute

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Troubled Families Programme National Evaluation

Staff survey among Troubled Families Co-ordinators

Conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of MHCLG

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1. Introduction

Background

Methodology

Introduction

Background

This report presents findings from the third wave of research among Troubled Families Co-ordinators (TFCs), conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). TFCs are those responsible for coordinating the delivery of the programme in local authorities.

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

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

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

Methodology

Data was gathered from TFCs through an online survey. MHCLG provided email addresses for TFCs across all 152 local authorities, who were then sent an email with a direct link to the survey. In total, responses were received from 109 TFCs and the overall response rate to the survey was 72%, an increase from 2016. The majority of these local authorities (80 of the 109 participating) also completed the survey in the previous wave. Fieldwork was conducted between 23 October and 13 December 2017.

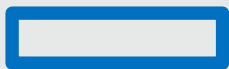
Separate reports present findings for similar surveys of Troubled Families Employment Advisors (TFEAs) and Troubled Families keyworkers or front-line practitioners. These staff surveys are designed to run annually over the five years of the evaluation; this is the third in the series.

The questionnaire was updated between waves to reflect changes in the delivery of the programme. However, many questions are consistent allowing for comparison over time. All TFCs were asked to complete all questions on the survey, with the exception of those who commission other partners who were asked to confirm what proportion.

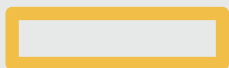
The following table outlines the fieldwork dates and sample sizes for each wave of research. As a guide, when looking at how a result varies between waves, differences should be between ± 5 to 8 percentage points to be sure they represent statistically significant (or 'real') differences and are not due to chance (based on 95% confidence intervals).

Wave 1	26 th October-30 th November 2015	118 TFCs	78%
Wave 2	31 st October-9 th December 2016	93 TFCs	61%
Wave 3	23 rd October-13 th December 2017	109 TFCs	72%

Where the 2017 result is significantly greater than in previous years this is highlighted by the use of a blue box, where it is lower it is highlighted by the use of a yellow box.



Result has significantly increased since the previous wave.



Result has significantly decreased since the previous wave.

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

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

2. Management of the Troubled Families Programme

Troubled Families Co-ordinator profile

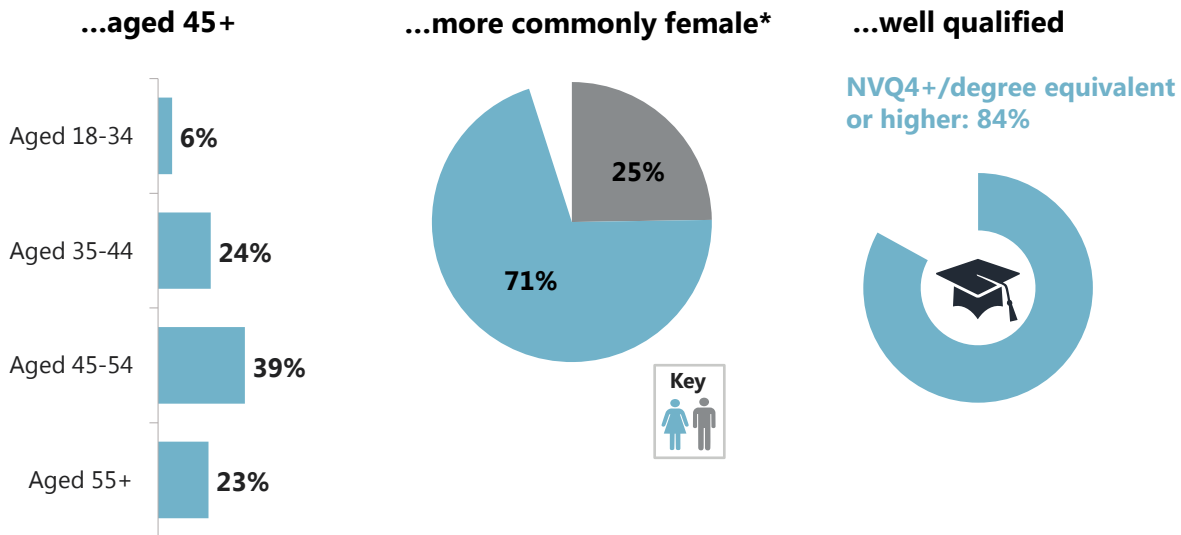
Programme management

2 Management of the Troubled Families Programme

TFCs are mostly female (71%), aged 45 or over (62%) and educated to degree level or higher (84%).

Who are TFCs?

Troubled Families Co-ordinators tend to be...



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QD2, QD1, QD3)
 *5% selected prefer not to say

TFCs are mostly employed by a local authority and are senior within their organisation.

In 2017 almost all participating TFCs (97%) are employed within a local authority. The chart below illustrates the breakdown by type of organisation, agency or department; with half (51%) working within a 'Children, young people and families team', three in ten (31%) within an 'Early help service/ team' and one in five (22%) representing a specific Troubled Families team within their local authority.

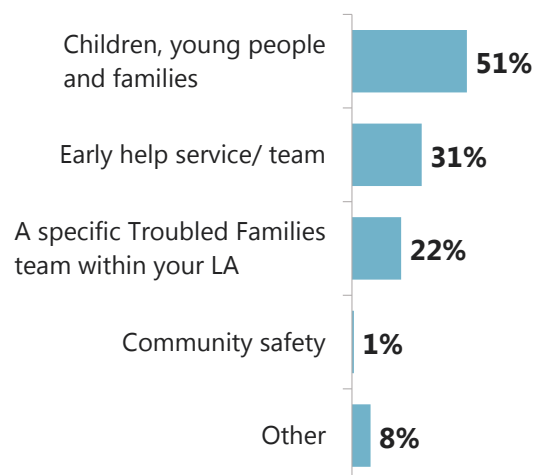
TFCs mostly hold senior roles within their organisation; a third of those participating describe their role as Head of Service (34%) with small proportions also Director or Assistant Director (two per cent and four per cent respectively). As shown in the chart below, another third are at Senior Manager level (33%) and one in five (20%) describe themselves as a Manager or Supervisor.

Troubled Families Co-ordinators tend to be...

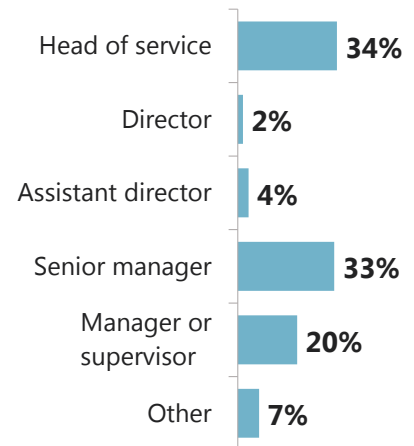
...employed by a local authority

97% are employed by a local authority

...working in a children, young people and families team



...in senior roles



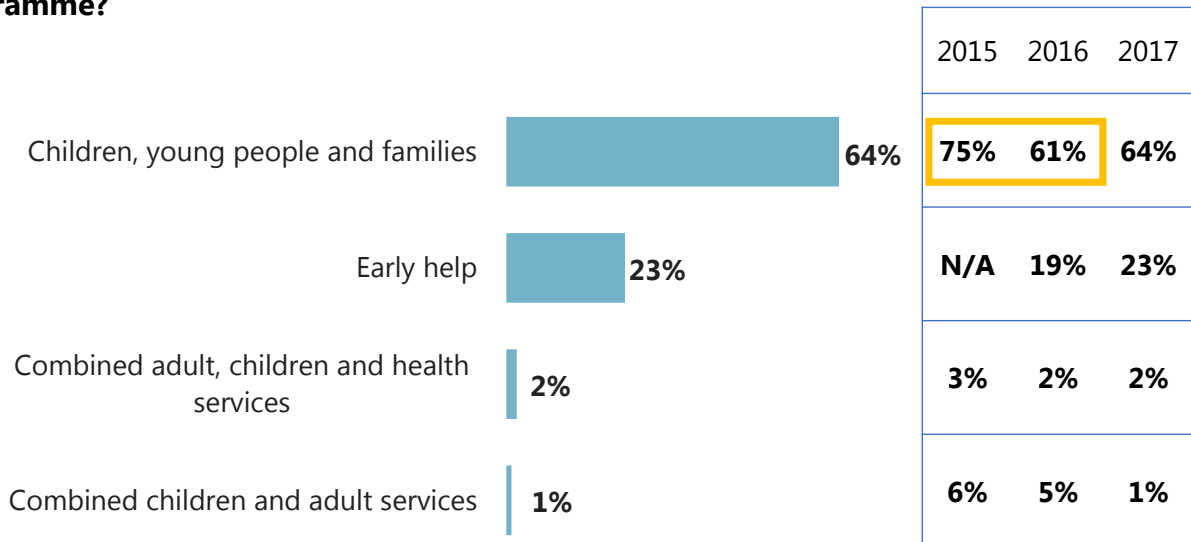
Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QA4, QA5, QA6)

The Troubled Families Programme is typically led by children, young people and families’ departments.

Programme management

Almost all Troubled Families Programmes are led by children’s services departments, with the majority based in children, young people and families’ departments (64%). A quarter of TFCs (23%) report that Early help teams lead the delivery of their Troubled Families Programme, with small proportions citing combined adult, children and health services (two per cent) or combined children and adult services (one per cent). This is a similar pattern to 2016.

Which local authority department is leading the delivery of your Troubled Families Programme?



Base: All TFCs (109): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC1)

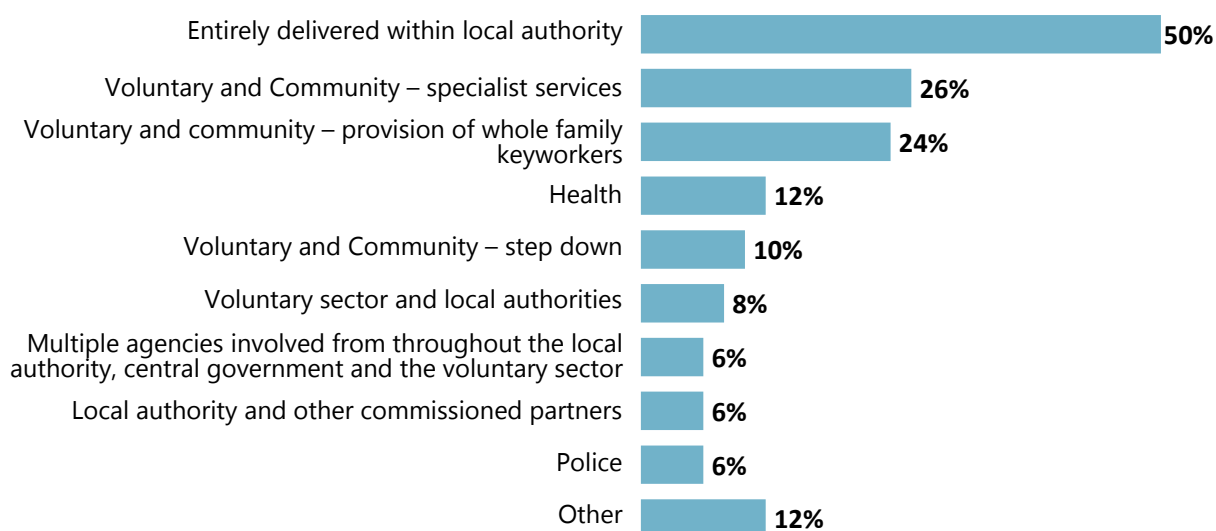
Half of local authorities deliver the Troubled Families Programme entirely themselves, but the voluntary and community sector is a key partner.

Half of TFCs (50%) report that their local authority delivers the Troubled Families Programme themselves.

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) is a key partner for many local authorities, commissioned to deliver services in several different ways; a quarter (26%) say the VCS delivers specialist services and another quarter (24%) say they provide whole family keyworking. One in ten (10%) commission the voluntary sector for step down services from the programme.

One in ten (12%) have commissioned health services to deliver the programme in their local authority area, and six per cent the police. Others use a combination of services including delivery in partnership with other agencies (such as central government and the voluntary sector) and other commissioned partners (six per cent each).

Who do you commission to deliver the programme in your local authority area?

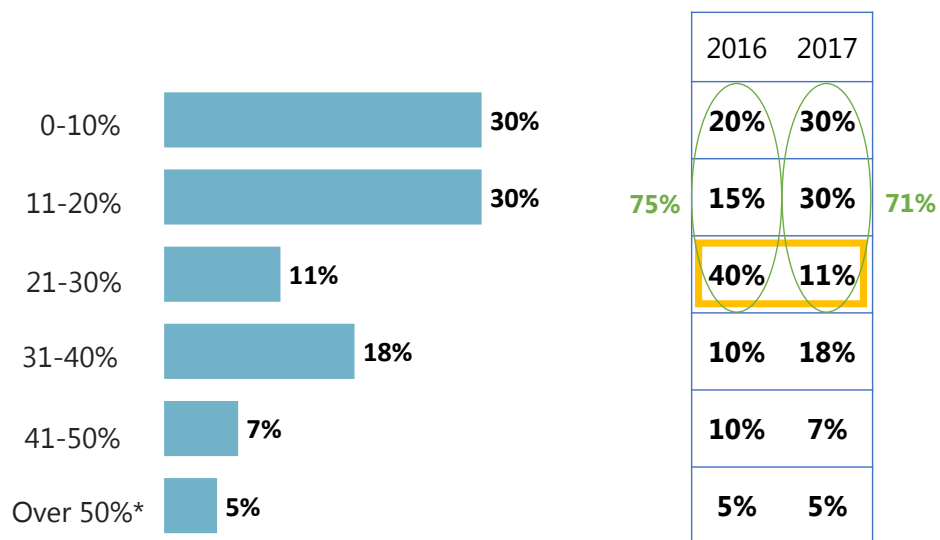


Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC2)

Where other partners are commissioned to deliver the programme, most are responsible for 30% or less of services.

Among those TFCs who report that their local authority commissions partners to manage elements of the programme, typically 30% or less is delivered by other agencies (including 71% of these local authorities). Only two local authorities who responded commission other partners to deliver the majority of their Troubled Families Programme. This is similar to findings in 2016, where 75% said other partners were responsible for 30% or less of services delivered.

Approximately what proportion of the programme is delivered by commissioning other partners?



Base: All TFCs who have commissioned other partners to manage some elements of their programme (44); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (W2Q2)

3. Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme

Effectiveness of the programme

Challenges to delivery

3 Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme

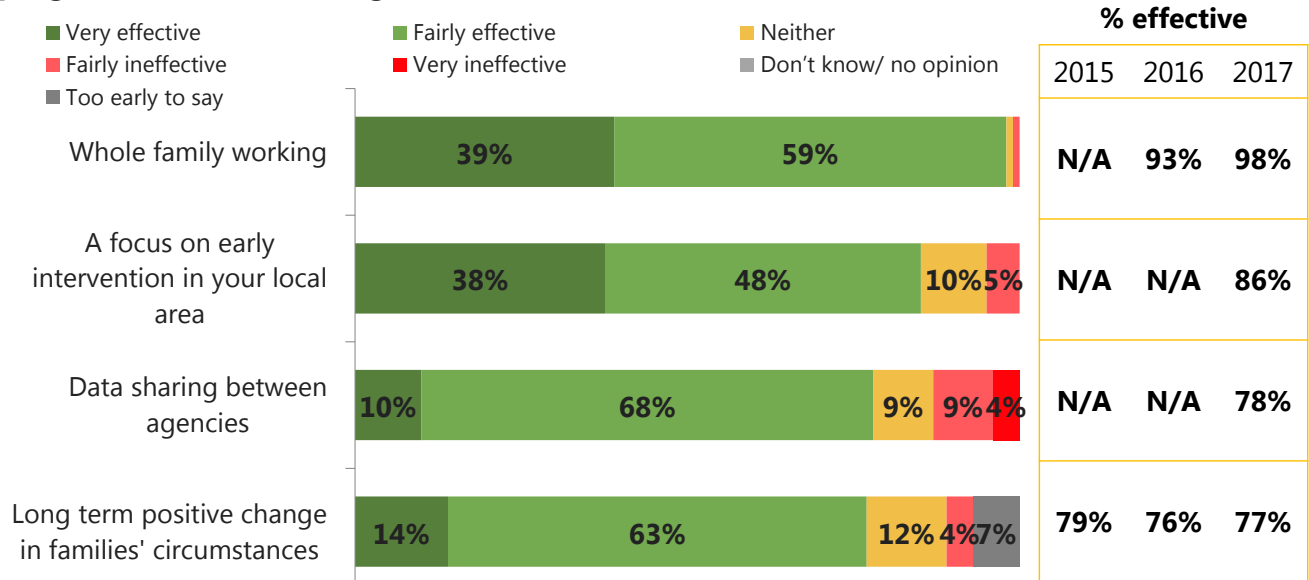
Most TFCs remain positive about the programme’s effectiveness in achieving whole family working and focusing on early intervention.

Effectiveness of the programme

TFCs feel most strongly about the effectiveness of the programme in achieving whole family working; almost all (98%) say it is effective, including two in five (39%) who say that the programme is very effective in this regard. Similarly, the majority say it is effective at achieving a focus on early intervention in their local area (86%). Slightly fewer feel that it achieves long-term positive change in families’ circumstances (77%) and that it effectively shares data between organisations (78%).

Findings for achieving whole family working and long-term positive change in families’ circumstances are in line with previous waves, where asked.

How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families programme is at achieving...

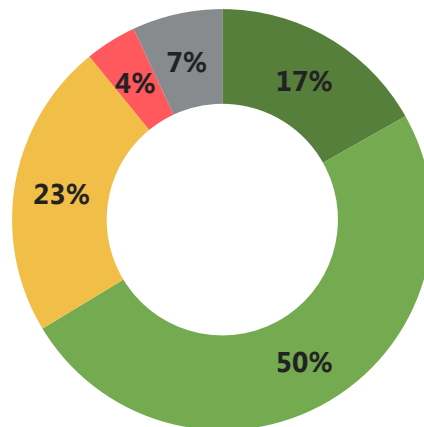


Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFC22)

TFCs are positive about the programme’s ability to promote wider service transformation.

TFCs were also asked to consider whether the Troubled Families Programme in their local authority is effective at achieving long-term positive change in wider system reform. Overall, two thirds of TFCs (67%) say that it is effective but this view is not strongly held, with half (50%) considering the programme to be fairly effective at achieving service transformation.

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



% effective	
2016	2017
74%	67%

- Very effective
- Fairly effective
- Neither
- Fairly ineffective
- Very ineffective
- Don't know/ no opinion
- Too early to say

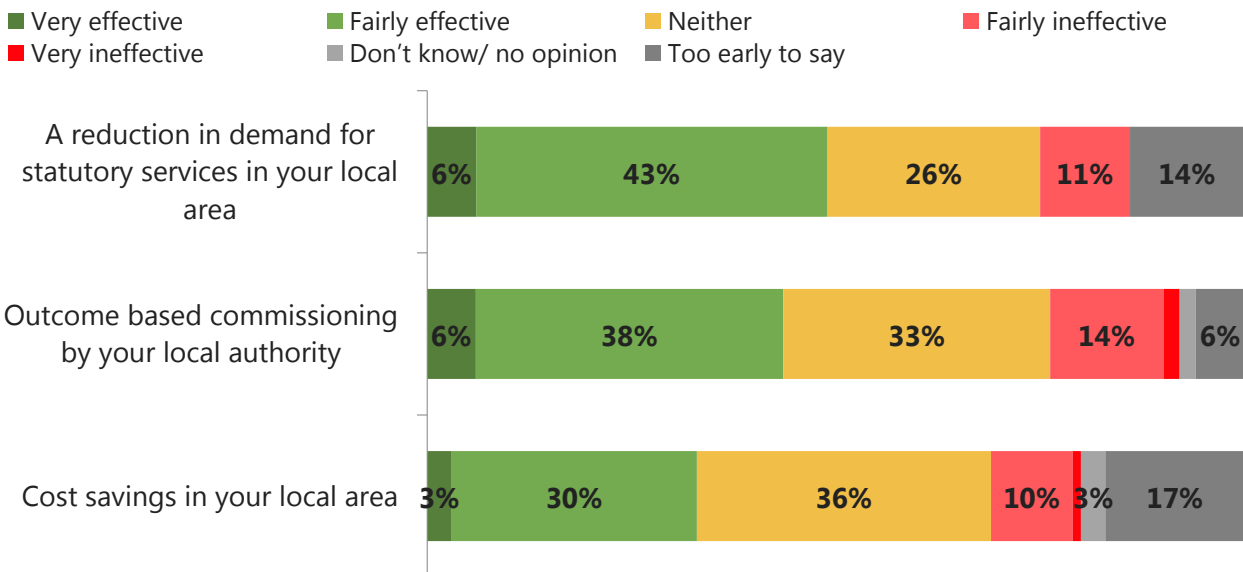
Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC22)

More TFCs are positive about how well the programme reduces demand for statutory services than say it is effective at cost saving and outcome-based commissioning.

TFCs suggest that the programme is not so strong in other areas, or appear undecided:

- half of TFCs (49%) feel the programme is effective at reducing demand for statutory services in their local area, but a quarter (26%) say it is neither effective nor ineffective in this respect.
- a third (33%) feel that the programme is effective at cost saving, but 17% say it is too early to say and 36% are unsure either way.
- two in five TFCs (44%) say the programme is effective at achieving outcome-based commissioning by their local authority, 16% say that it is ineffective and a third (33%) feel that it is neither.

How effective or ineffective would you say the delivery of the Troubled Families programme is at achieving...

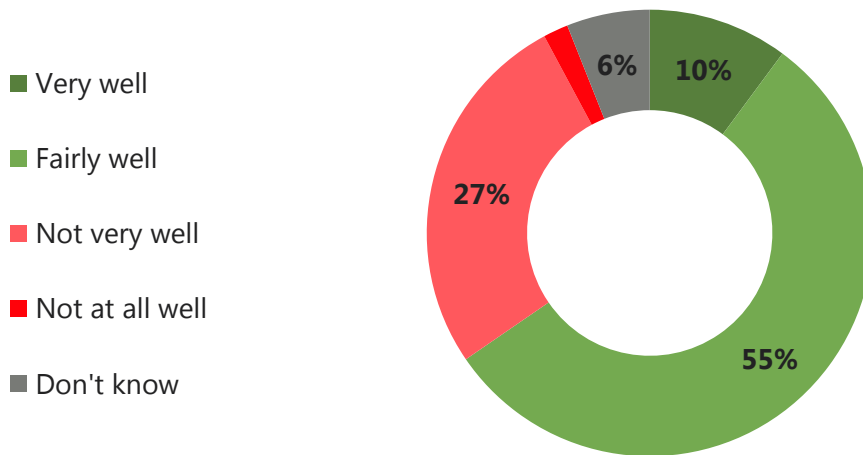


Base: All TFCs (109): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFC22)

TFCs are positive about how well their local programme manages demand on children's services.

In this wave TFCs were asked to consider how well their local Troubled Families Programme is able to manage demand on children's services, for example, through evidence of reducing children in need and child protection numbers. Overall the findings are positive, two thirds of TFCs (65%) feel that the programme does this very or fairly well. However, it should be noted that three in ten (28%) feel that the programme in their area is not doing well at managing this demand.

How well, if at all, would you say that the Troubled Families Programme in your local authority area is able to manage demand on children's services (for example, through evidence of reducing children in need and child protection numbers)?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. ((W3QTFC7)

Consistent with previous years, cuts to core services are recognised as the biggest challenge to delivery.

Challenges to delivery

The two previous waves of research identified the main challenge to delivery of the programme as cuts and capacity problems in core services, which continues to be identified as the biggest challenge (mentioned by 68% of TFCs). This is again followed by the programme's funding model of payment by results based on progress achieved with families (selected by 53%).

What would you say are the main challenges facing delivery of the Troubled Families Programme in your local authority?



Base: All TFCs (109): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.

*'No/ lack of data sharing' added in 2017 as a precode, as such a degree of caution should be taken in comparing trend data. (QTFC23)

Too much bureaucracy appears to be an increasing concern for TFCs, mentioned by half (50%) in 2017, double the proportion raising this in 2016 (26%). In addition, being too data driven is also selected by more (42% compared with 32% in 2016). However, while these problems are identified as of greater concern, it should be acknowledged that some of these changes may be a result of the fact that TFCs were presented with a different list in 2017.

Following this the key challenges continue to be a general lack of funding, restructuring or changes to the Senior Leadership team, funding streams not being shared across local partners and a lack of data sharing.

Overall views of the Troubled Families Programme - Summary

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

In 2017, TFCs were asked to consider, for the first time, the effectiveness of the Troubled Families Programme in terms of focussing on **early intervention** in the local area and **data sharing between agencies**. In both regards most TFCs consider the programme to be effective. However, attitudes towards the programme's effectiveness in relation to **cost savings, achieving outcome-based commissioning** and **reducing demand for statutory services** in the local area are mixed. While TFCs are more likely to say that the programme is effective rather than ineffective for all three elements, significant proportions continue to say it is too early to say or are unsure either way.

While views are also positive about how well the local programme **manages demand on children's services**, more than a quarter say this is not done well.

For TFCs the **biggest challenge** to delivering an effective Troubled Families Programme continues to be **cuts in core services or capacity problems**. **Too much bureaucracy** is an increasing concern, mentioned by more TFCs in 2017.

4. Workforce and workforce development

Troubled Families staff

Current skill levels

Workforce development

4. Workforce and workforce development

While there are a similar number of frontline staff delivering the Troubled Families Programme compared with 2016, there are now more other lead professionals involved in delivery and fewer dedicated intervention workers.

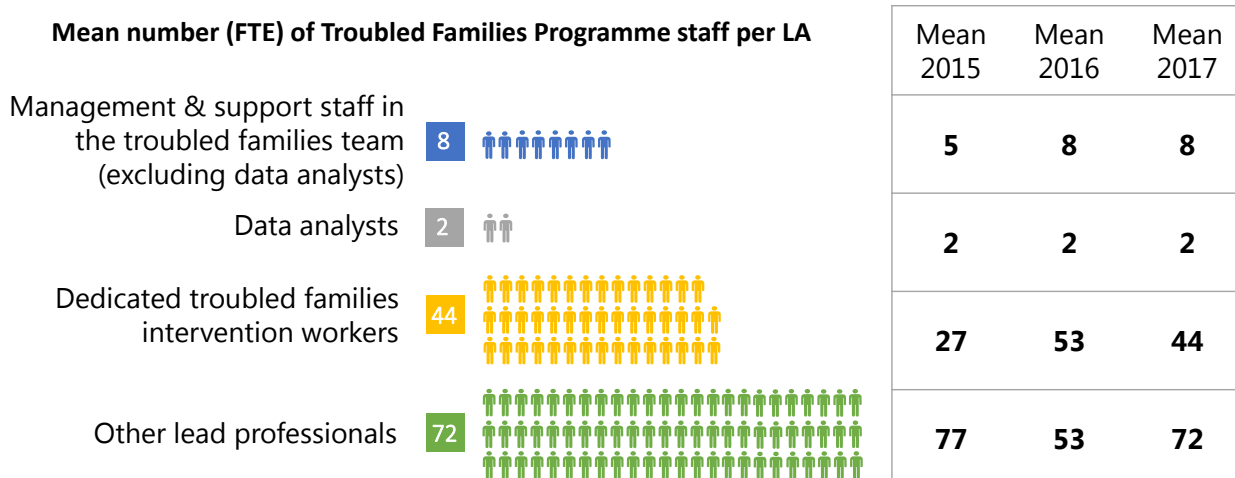
Troubled families staff

TFCs were asked to provide the number of staff involved in the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme in their local authority across various roles. All figures are expressed as full-time equivalents.

The mean number of management and support staff (eight) and data analysts (two) is the same as in 2016. However, the balance between dedicated troubled families' intervention workers and other lead professionals has reverted to the pattern found in 2015, with fewer dedicated staff (an average of 44 compared with 72 other lead professionals).

This change may be related to a change in approach to commissioning among the participating local authorities this wave, with more who say they are delivering the programme themselves than those who commission partner agencies.

Approximately how many staff in each of the following roles are involved in delivering the Troubled Families Programme within your local authority area?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC4)

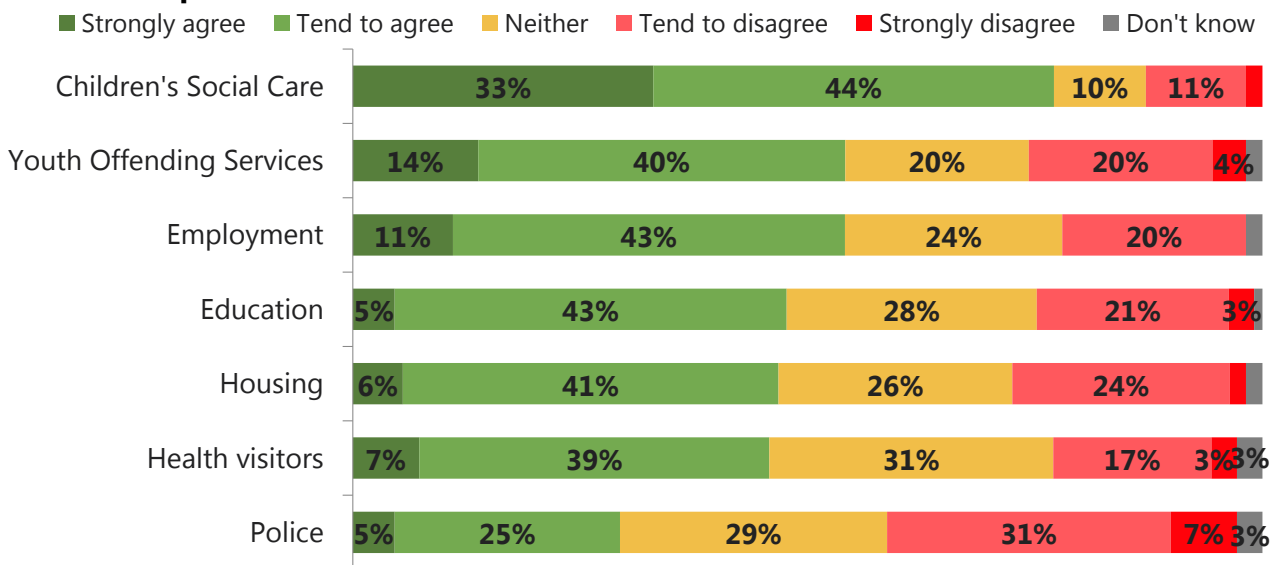
TFCs feel staff in children’s social care have the skills to deliver the whole family approach but are less confident about the skills of staff in other service areas.

Current skill levels

For the first time this wave, TFCs were asked whether they agree that staff in a range of different service areas have the skills to deliver the whole family approach. Responses vary by service:

- staff working in children’s social care are best equipped (77% agree they have the right skills).
- around half agree that staff in youth offending and employment services have the skills they need (both 54%).
- just under half (48%) agree that staff in education services have the skills to deliver the whole family approach along with staff in housing services and health visitors (47% and 46% respectively).
- TFCs are least confident in the police; 30% agree they have the necessary skills and 38% disagree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that *staff in the following services* currently have the skills which allow them to deliver the whole family approach in your area? Select one response for each statement.



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFC5)

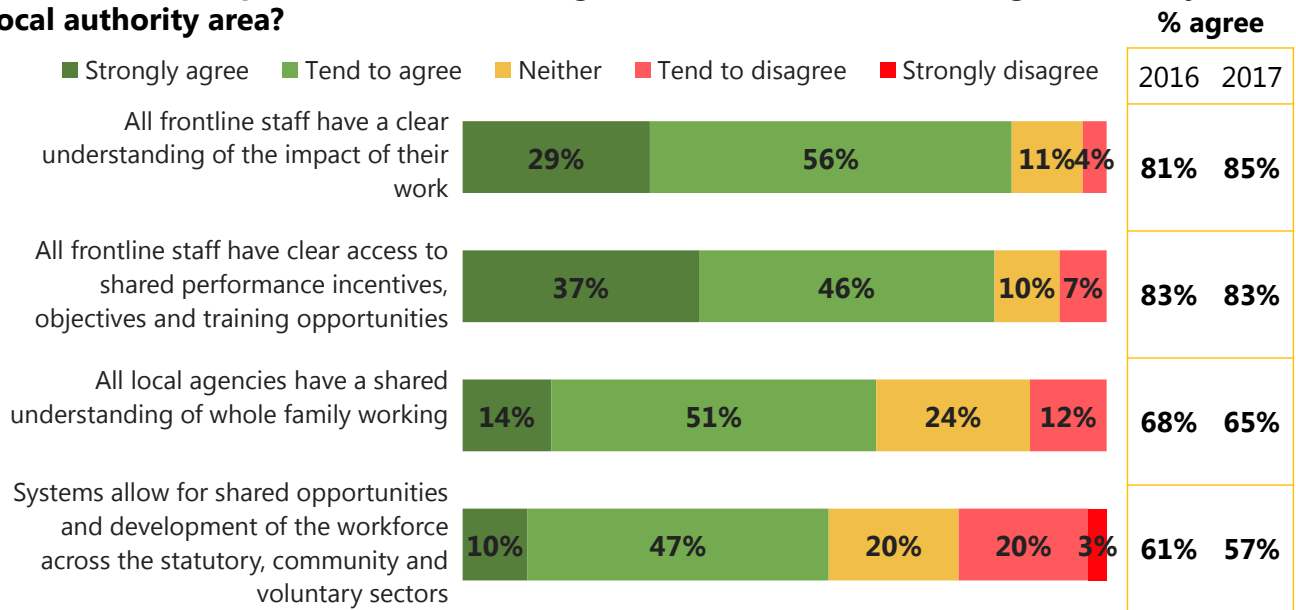
TFCs continue to be positive about workforce development.

Workforce development

The vast majority of TFCs feel that frontline staff understand the impact of their work (85% agree) and have clear access to performance incentives, objectives and training opportunities (83% agree). This mirrors findings from 2016.

While still positive, fewer agree that all local agencies have a shared understanding of whole family working (65%) and that systems allow for shared opportunities and development of the workforce across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors (57%). However, these findings are also in line with 2016.

To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements about workforce development for staff working in the Troubled Families Programme in your local authority area?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q3TFC)

Workforce and workforce development - Summary

Most TFCs continue to be positive about workforce development, including how well **frontline staff understand the impact of their work** and have **clear access to performance incentives and training opportunities**. To a lesser extent, they also feel that **local agencies have a shared understanding of whole family working and systems allowing for shared opportunities and development of the workforce across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors**.

When asked to consider whether staff currently **have the required skills to deliver a whole family approach**, TFCs are most positive about those working in children's social care, staff in the youth offending service and employment services. However, they are less confident that staff in other areas, such as education and housing, alongside health visitors and the police, have the right skills.

5. Needs based commissioning

Attitudes towards commissioning

Wider influence of Troubled Families Programme

5 Needs-based commissioning

Overall TFCs continue to be positive towards the commissioning process; they feel it is based on an effective assessment of local needs and best practice.

Attitudes towards commissioning

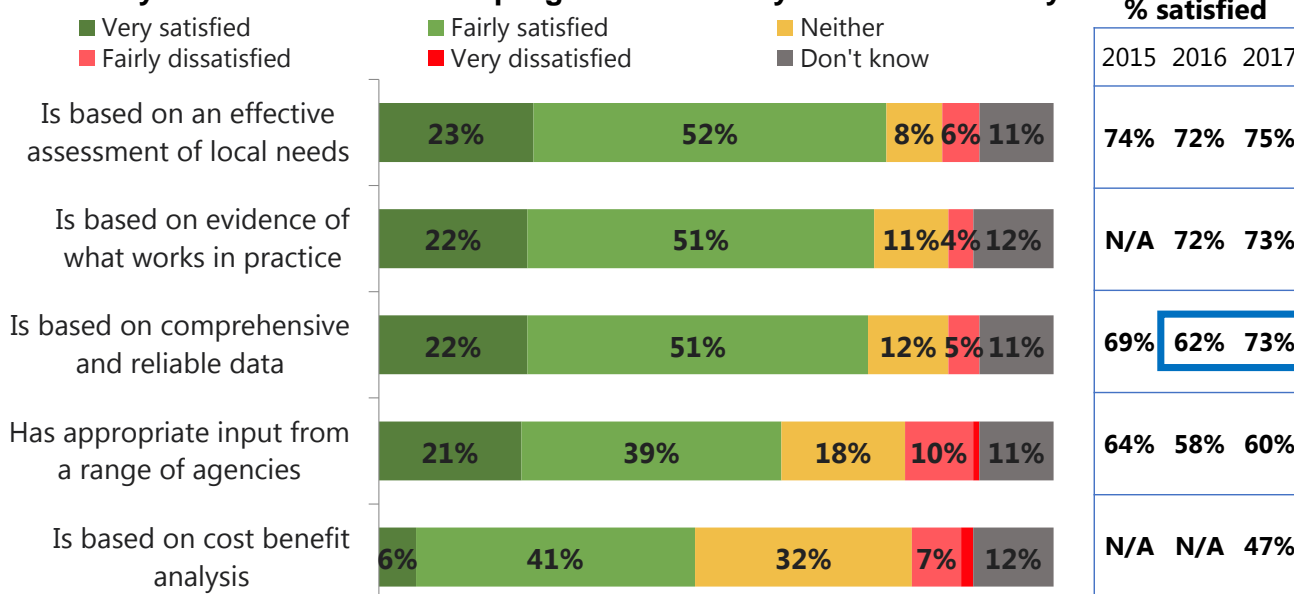
TFCs were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with a range of aspects of the commissioning process funded by the Troubled Families Programme within their local authority.

The majority of TFCs are satisfied that the commissioning process is based on an effective assessment of local needs (75%) and on evidence of what works in practice (73%), in line with 2016 findings.

In comparison to 2016, TFCs are more satisfied that the process of commissioning services is based on comprehensive and reliable data; this figure has risen from 62% to 73% in 2017.

While still mostly positive, TFCs are less convinced that the commissioning process has appropriate input from a range of agencies (60% satisfied) or that it is based on cost benefit analysis (44% say they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or that they do not know).

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the process of commissioning services funded by the Troubled Families programme within your local authority...



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFC11)

TFCs feel that the programme has influence on commissioning of local authority and partner services beyond Troubled Families but this is less evident in commissioning voluntary services.

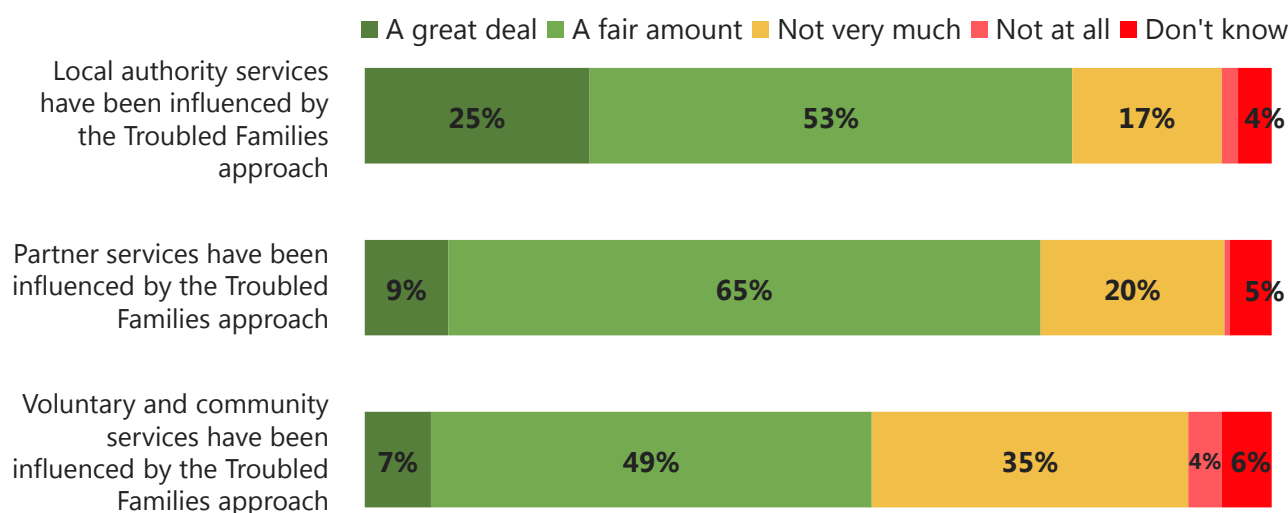
Wider influence of Troubled Families Programme

TFCs are positive about the influence of the Troubled Families Programme on their local authority's wider approach to commissioning services.

The programme's influence is most strongly felt in **commissioning local authority services**; four in five TFCs (78%) say that local authority services have been influenced a great deal or fair amount.

Slightly fewer (74%) say that **partner services have been influenced** by the Troubled Families approach. The influence on commissioning **voluntary and community services is less pronounced**, but still recognised by over half (56%). This may be related to the fact that TFCs have some reservations about whether systems allow for shared opportunities and development of the workforce across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, suggesting this could be an area for the programme to improve on.

To what extent, if at all, would you say the Troubled Families Programme has influenced your local authority's approach to the commissioning of services beyond Troubled Families in each of the following areas?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (QTFC13)

Needs-based commissioning - Summary

Overall, most TFCs continue to feel satisfied that the commissioning process is based on an effective assessment of local needs, evidence of what works in practice and comprehensive and reliable data. However, TFCs are less sure that the process has appropriate input from a range of agencies or, in particular, that it is based on any form of cost benefit analysis. These findings are in line with 2016, but in 2017 more are satisfied that the process is based on comprehensive and reliable data.

TFCs are positive about the influence of the Troubled Families Programme on local authorities' wider approach to commissioning services. The programme's influence is most strongly felt in commissioning local authority services, but less pronounced in terms of voluntary and community services.

6. Identifying and supporting families on the programme

Identifying and prioritising

Employment support

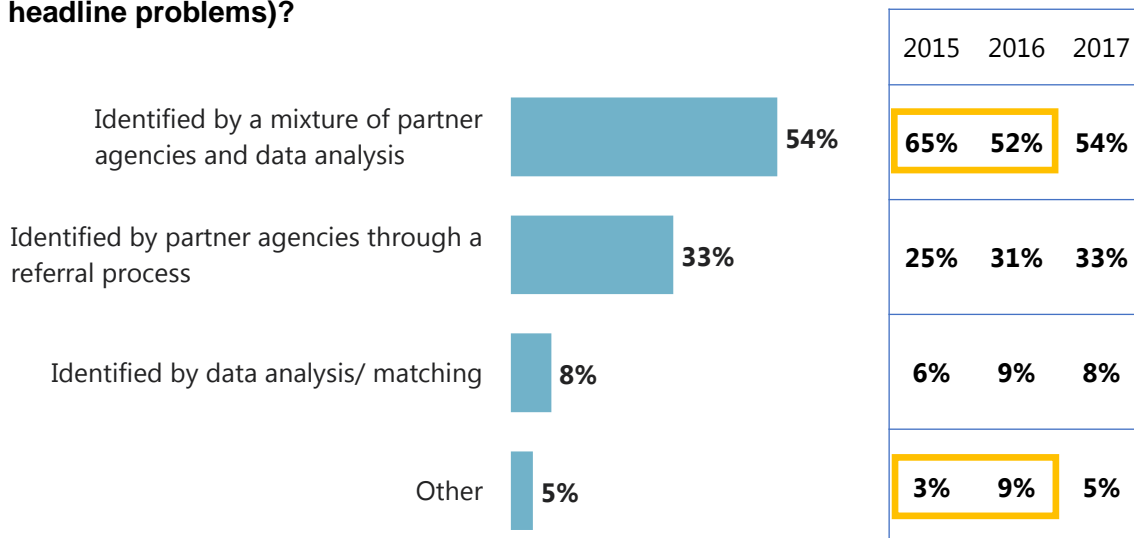
6 Identifying and supporting families on the programme

Local authorities continue to use a mix of partner agencies and data analysis to identify eligible families.

Identifying and prioritising

Half of TFCs (54%) say that their local authority identifies families to bring on the programme using both partner agencies and data analysis. A third (33%) say that families are identified by partner agencies through a referral process and eight per cent use data analysis and matching. This is very similar to findings from 2016.

Which of the following approaches does your local authority take to identify eligible families to bring onto the programme (i.e. families who have two or more of the six headline problems)?



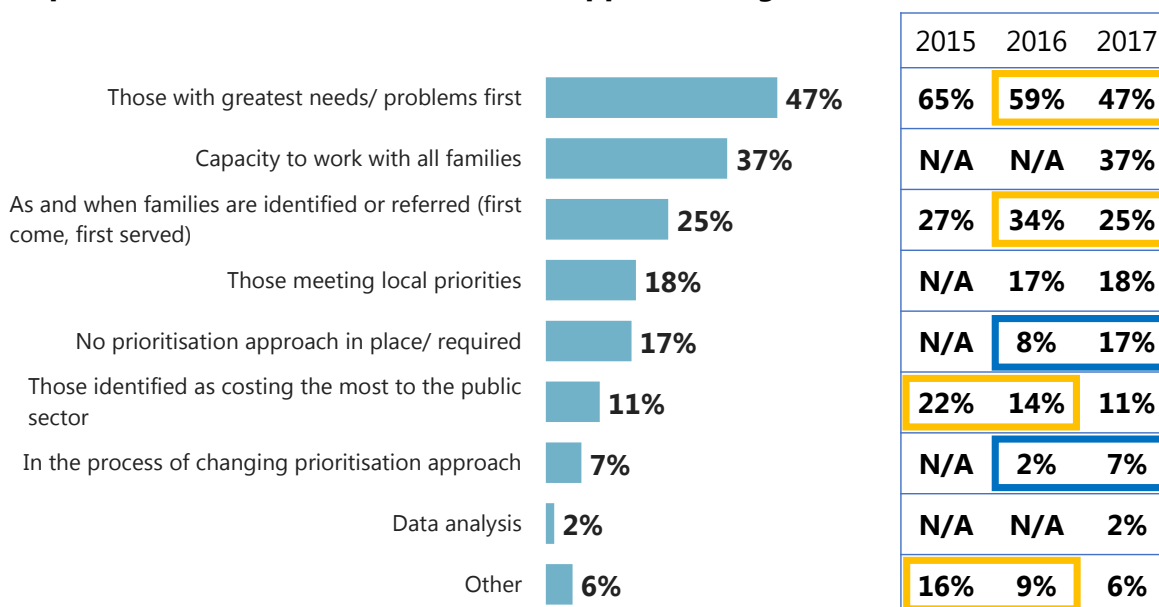
Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC14)

Families with greatest need / problems are prioritised to receive support through the programme.

Local authorities use a mix of approaches to identify the families supported by the programme once they have been identified as eligible, with some using more than one approach. However, the most common prioritisation method, is on the basis of the **greatest need or problems** (mentioned by 47% of TFCs). However, two in five (37%) say they don't prioritise as they have the **capacity to work with all families**, a quarter (25%) adopt a **'first come, first served'** approach and one in five (18%) choose those meeting local priorities. A further one in ten (11%) prioritise those who **cost the most to the public sector**. One in five (17%) say they **do not have a method** of prioritising families.

These approaches are in the same order of priority as the previous wave of research, but the capacity to work with all families was added to the list of options in 2017. With this in mind, fewer mention identifying families based on the greatest need or on a 'first come, first served' basis and more say they do not have an approach in place or are in the process of changing their prioritisation approach.

Once a family has been identified as eligible for the programme, what approach, if any, is used to prioritise the families who receive support through Troubled Families?



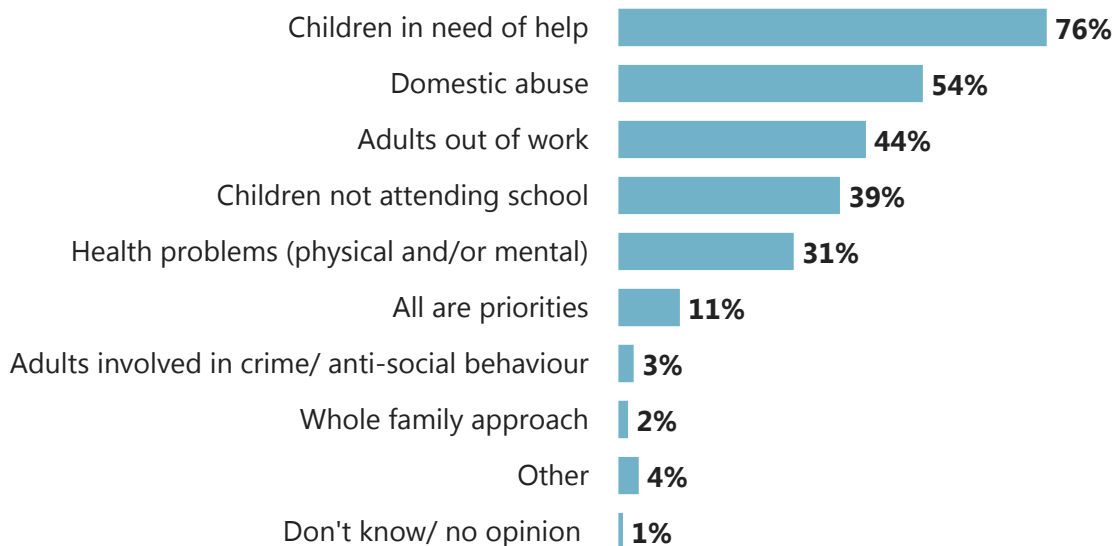
Base: All TFCs (109): Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (QTFC15)

TFCs say that the most important priority of the six Troubled Families headline criteria is children in need of help.

TFCs were asked to identify the two or three most important priorities for the programme in their local authority area. Three-quarters (76%) choose children in need of help, half (54%) highlight domestic abuse and 44% mention helping adults who are out of work.

Other key priorities for local Troubled Families Programmes include children not attending school (mentioned by 39% of TFCs) and health problems (31%), as illustrated in the chart below.

Which of the following, if any, are the two or three most important priorities for the Troubled Families programme in your local authority area? Select all that apply.



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (W3QTFC15)

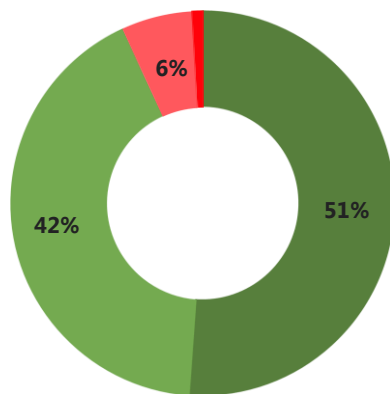
As in 2016 most TFCs say that employment support is an integrated part of the programme.

Employment support

Employment support continues to be a key component of the Troubled Families Programme; the vast majority of TFCs (93%) consider employment support to be an integrated part of the programme in their local authority, in line with findings from 2016.

And to what extent, if at all, do you think employment support is an integrated part of the Troubled Families programme in your local authority?

Employment support is an integrated part of the programme



	2016	2017
A great deal/ fair amount	95%	93%
Not very much/ at all	5%	7%

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

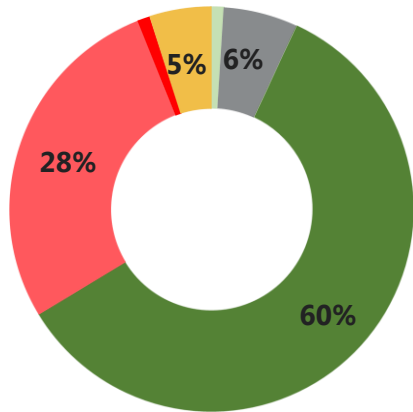
Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q9TFC)

TFCs mostly feel the timing of employment support is about right.

The majority of TFCs (60%) are also positive about the timing of employment support and say that it is offered at the right time. However, a notable minority say employment support is offered to families too late; consistent with the previous wave of research, three in ten TFCs feel that employment support is offered either a little or far too late (29% in 2017 and 31% in 2016).

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

Timing of employment support



	2016	2017
Far too early/ a little too early	7%	7%
A little too late/ far too late	31%	29%

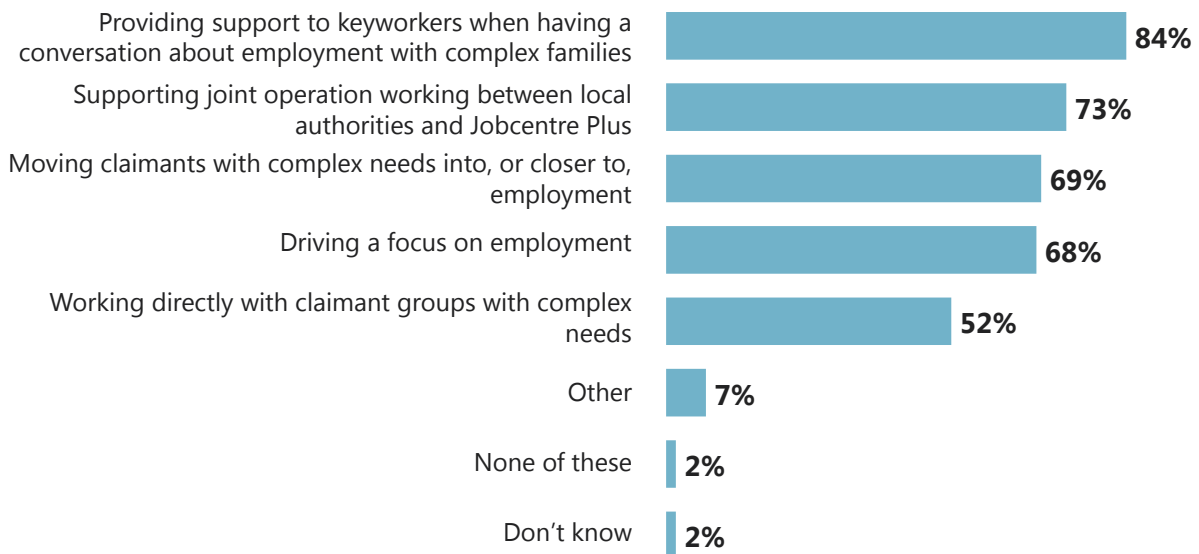
- Far too early
- A little too early
- At the right time
- A little too late
- Far too late
- Don't know

Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017.
Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q8TFC)

TFCs are satisfied with the TFEA model.

For the first time in 2017, TFCs were asked to consider how successful the TFEA model has been in improving outcomes for families, from a given list. Almost all TFCs find the model to have been successful in more than one of these ways. Top of the list is **providing support to keyworkers when having a conversation about employment with complex families** (highlighted by 84% of TFCs). In addition, three-quarters (73%) say the TFEA model is **successful in supporting joint working between local authorities and Jobcentre Plus**. Seven in ten consider the model a success both in terms of **helping claimants with complex needs get into work and at driving a focus on employment** (69% and 68% respectively). Half of TFCs (52%) feel that the TFEA model is **successful in working directly with claimant groups with complex needs**.

In which of the following ways, would you say that the TFEA model has been successful in improving outcomes for families? Select all that apply.



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. (W3QTFC10)

Identifying and supporting families on the programme - Summary

To identify eligible families for the programme, TFCs typically say that local authorities use **both partner agencies and data analysis** and then most prioritise families, once they have been identified, based on those with the **greatest need and problems**.

For three-quarters of TFCs the most important priority for the Troubled Families Programme is to work with **children in need of help**. However, over half say that **domestic abuse** is a priority in their local authority.

A great success is the way in which employment support has come to be regarded an integrated part of the Troubled Families Programme, with many suggesting that **employment support is being offered to families at the right time**. Indeed, when asked to consider how the TFEA model has been successful in improving outcomes for families, TFCs tend to consider all aspects as a success – although **providing support to keyworkers when having a conversation about employment with complex families** is regarded as particularly successful.

7. The service transformation maturity model

Leadership and governance

Partnership working

Local services

7 The service transformation maturity model

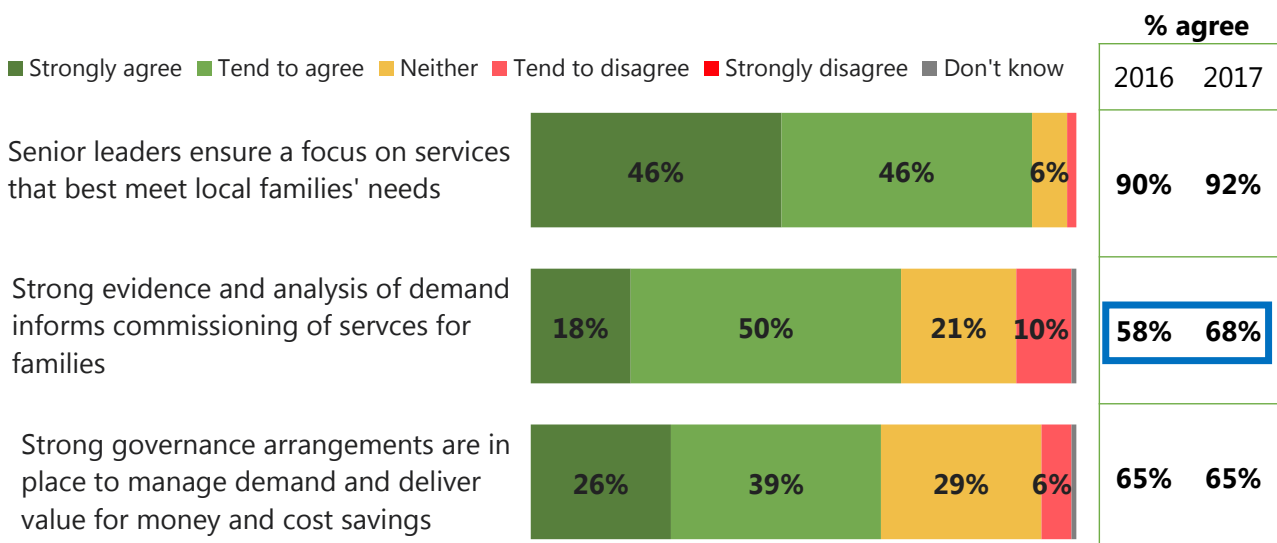
TFCs are generally happy with how the Troubled Families programme is led in their local area, highlighting the strength of senior leaders and governance.

Leadership and governance

TFCs were asked to consider how the Troubled Families Programme is led and governed in their local authority. The findings are positive, with most TFCs (92%) in agreement that senior leaders ensure a focus on services that best meet family needs (46% of whom strongly agree).

Two-thirds of TFCs (68%) agree that strong evidence and analysis of demand informs commissioning of services for families, an improvement from 2016 (58%). Three in five (65%) also agree that strong governance arrangements are in place to manage demand and deliver value for money and cost savings but as in the previous wave some remain unsure on this point (with 29% selecting neither agree nor disagree).

To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements about how the Troubled Families programme is led and governed in your local authority area?

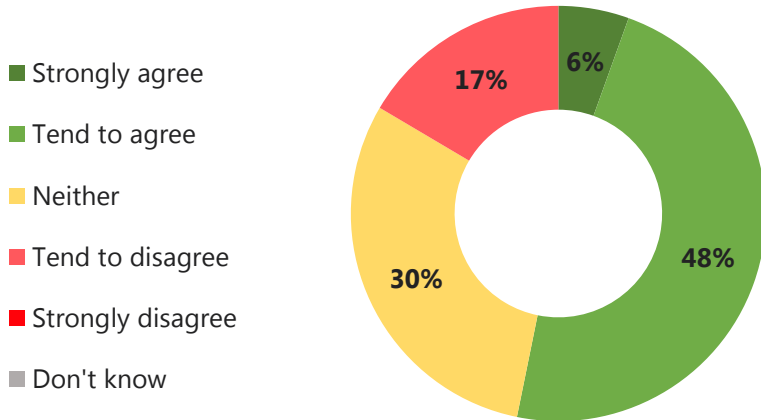


Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more (W2Q3TFCA)

TFCs are less sure that all agencies have a common purpose, but are more inclined to agree with this statement than in 2016.

TFCs are less convinced that all agencies in the local area have a common purpose in terms of working toward commissioning services to deliver whole family outcomes. Although half (54%) agree with this statement, showing an improvement from 2016 (43%), three in ten TFCs (30%) are unsure and 17% disagree.

**To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements about how the Troubled Families programme is led and governed in your local authority area...
All agencies in the local area have a common purpose, commissioning services designed to deliver whole family outcomes?**



	2016	2017
% agree	43%	54%

Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
Percentages only shown if 3% or more (W2Q3TFCA)

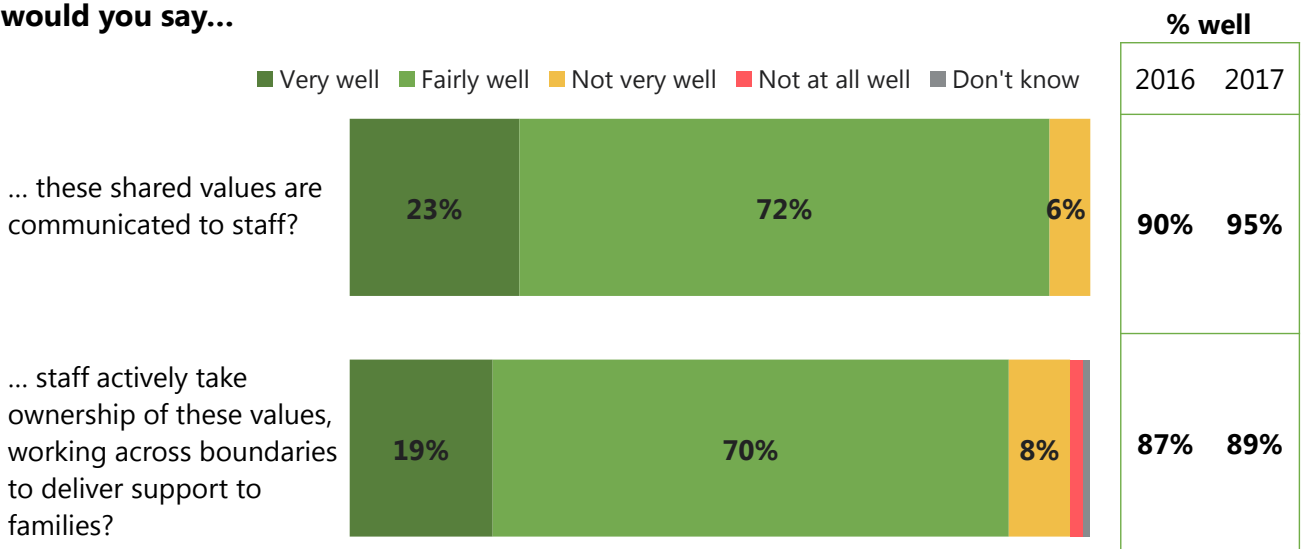
TFCs are positive about the way the programme involves local agencies, in terms of communication and commitment to shared values.

Partnership working

The Troubled Families Programme involves local agencies in a shared commitment to transform the way services work with families with complex needs and whole family working. TFCs were asked to consider how these values are communicated to staff and whether staff take ownership of them.

TFCs are very positive about partnership working. The vast majority say that shared values are well communicated and staff actively take ownership of these values to work across boundaries and deliver support (95% and 89%, respectively).

Troubled Families involves local agencies in a shared commitment to transform the way services work with families with complex needs and whole family working. How well would you say...

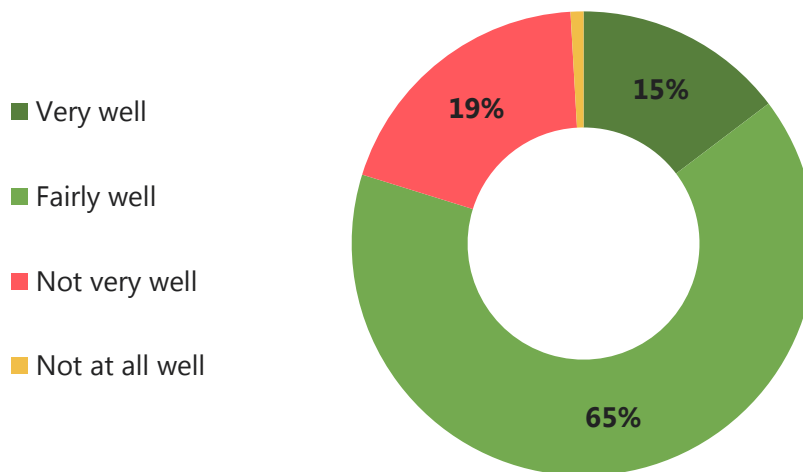


Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
 Percentages only shown if over 3% or more (W2Q4TFC)

The majority say delivery structures enable staff to work together to share priorities and outcomes.

In 2017 TFCs were also asked to consider how well delivery structures enable staff from different disciplines to work together to share priorities and outcomes; the majority (80%) feel that this is done well, as shown in the chart below.

Troubled Families involves local agencies in a shared commitment to transform the way services work with families with complex needs and whole family working. How well would you say delivery structures enable staff from different disciplines to work together to share priorities and outcomes?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
Percentages only shown if over 3% or more (W2Q4TFC)

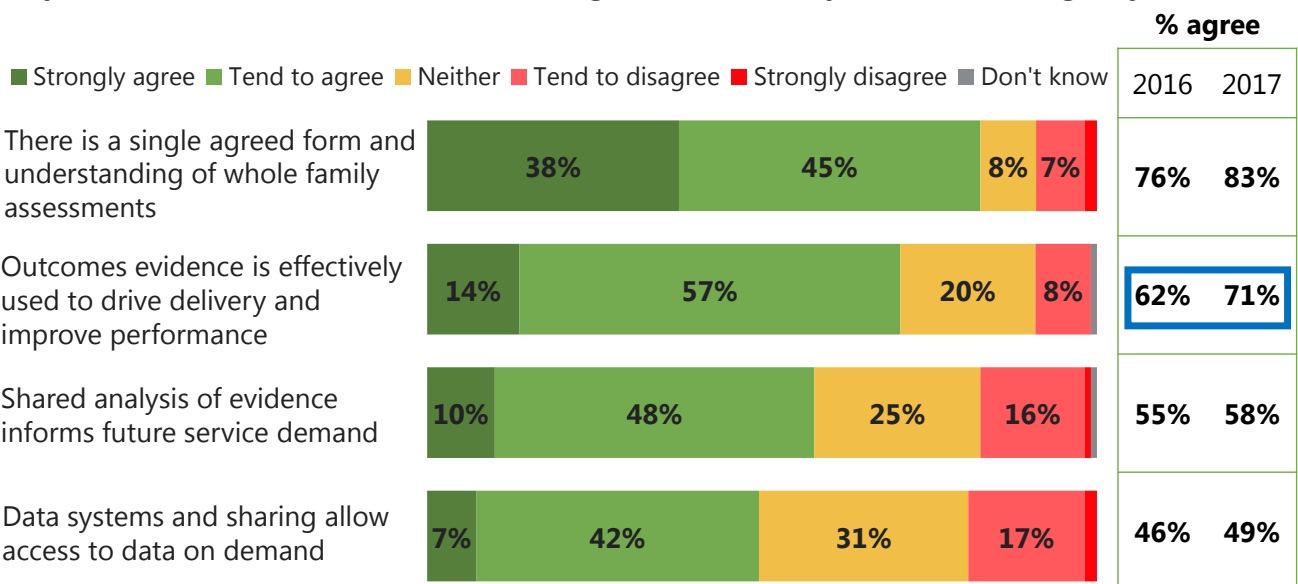
Overall, the Troubled Families Programme is viewed positively in regard to allowing staff to work together effectively, specifically in terms of an agreed approach to whole family assessments and the use of outcomes evidence.

Local services

Most TFCs believe that there is a single agreed form and understanding of whole family assessments; four in five (83%) agree that this exists in their local area. Seven in ten (71%) say that outcomes evidence is effectively used to drive delivery and improve performance; this has risen significantly from 62% in 2016.

As in the last wave, TFCs are less sure that there are proper evidence analysis and data systems in place to allow staff to work together effectively: 58% agree that shared analysis of evidence informs future service demand and half (49%) that sharing and systems allow access to data on demand which would encourage joint working practices.

And to what extent would you agree or disagree that the Troubled Families programme in your local area allows staff to work together effectively in the following ways?



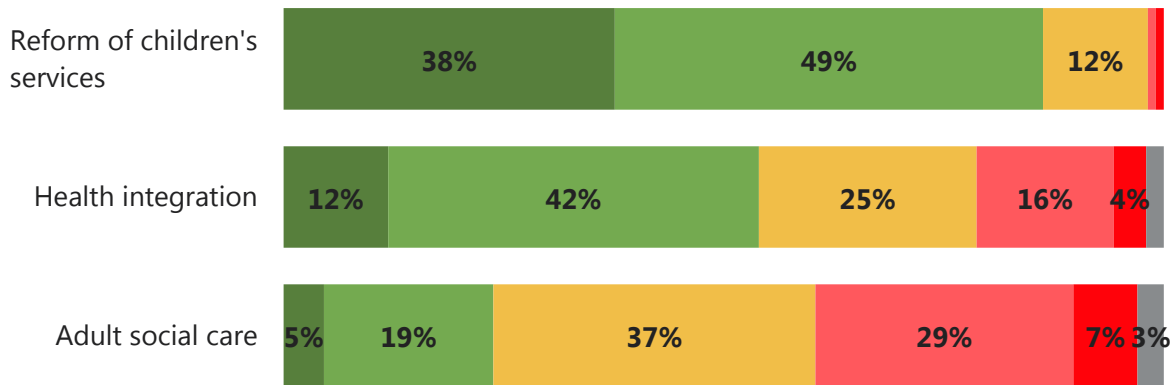
Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017. Percentages only shown if 3% or more. (W2Q6TFC)

TFCs have mixed views on how well the programme in their local authority links to the wider local and national transformation programme.

While most TFCs (87%) feel the Troubled Families offer in their local authority area links to wider local and national transformation programmes in children’s services, they are less confident that their local offering in health integration links with these wider programmes (54% agree, and a quarter are unsure). However, the key problem is around adult social care: more disagree than agree that the programme in their local authority links to wider local and national transformation programmes in adult social care (36% disagree and 24% agree) and two in five (37%) are unsure either way.

To what extent do you agree the Troubled Families offer in your local authority area links to wider local and national transformation programmes in the following areas?

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



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
 Percentages only shown if 3% or more (W3Q7TFC)

The service transformation maturity model - Summary

TFCs are generally positive about both how the programme is led and governed in their local area, specifically in relation to **senior leaders ensuring a focus on services that best meet family needs**, and with the way in which **partnership working** is used. Most TFCs say that **shared values are communicated** to staff well, that **staff actively take ownership of these values** to work across boundaries in delivering support, and that the **delivery structures enable staff from different disciplines to work together**.

The programme is also viewed positively in relation to allowing staff to work together effectively, specifically in terms of having an **agreed approach to whole family assessments and the use of outcomes evidence**. However, in line with the 2016 survey findings, TFCs are less sure that there are proper **evidence analysis and data systems** in place to allow staff to work together effectively.

While most TFCs feel that the Troubled Families offer in their local authority **links to wider local and national transformation programmes with regard to the reform of children's services**, TFCs are less convinced that these links exist in health integration and, particularly, adult social care.

8. The national programme

Attitudes towards the national Troubled Families team

8 The national programme

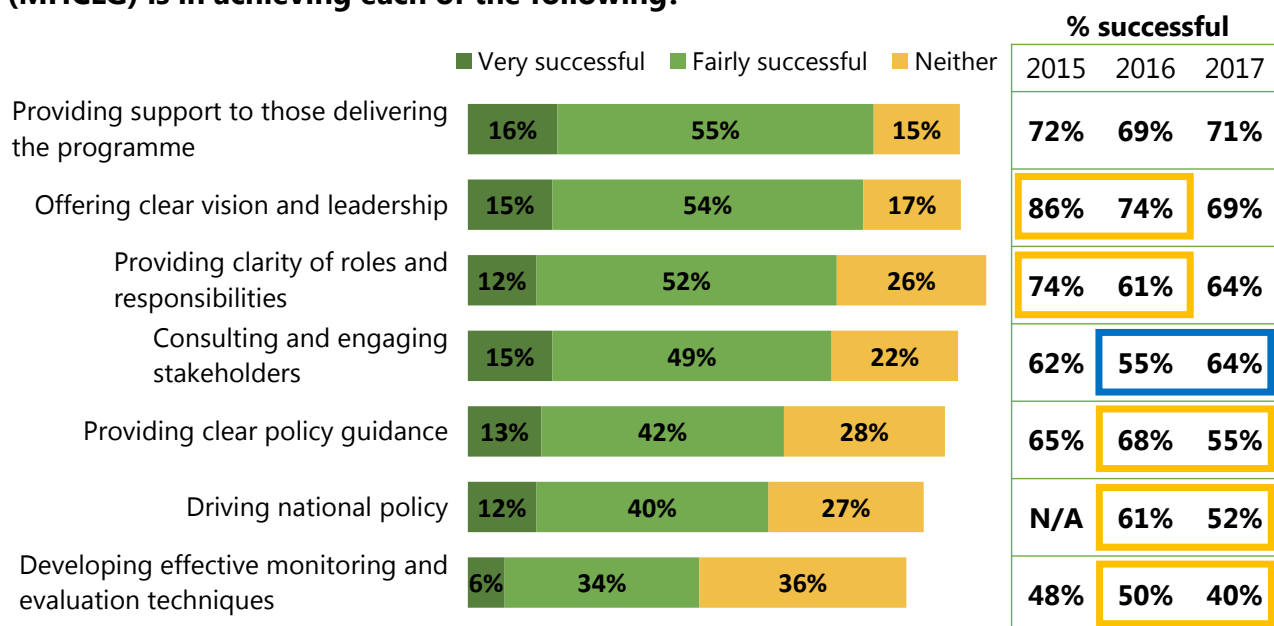
The national Troubled Families team continues to be highly regarded in terms of offering support, vision and leadership to those delivering the programme.

TFCs are largely supportive of the national Troubled Families team (MHCLG) in terms of their success in providing support to those delivering the programme and offering clear vision and leadership (mentioned by 71% and 69% of TFCs, respectively).

Close to two-thirds of TFCs also regard the national team as successful in terms of providing clarity of roles and responsibilities and consulting and engaging stakeholders (64% each); an improvement in the latter suggests that MHCLG has got better at working with stakeholders over the last year (previously 55%).

As shown in the chart below, over half regard the national team as successful in providing clear policy guidance (55%) and driving national policy (52%). The main, continued, note of doubt relates to developing effective monitoring and evaluation techniques; just two in five (40%) consider MHCLG as successful in this respect.

How successful or unsuccessful would you say the national Troubled Families team (MHCLG) is in achieving each of the following?



Base: All TFCs (109); Fieldwork dates 23 October to 13 December 2017
 Percentages only shown if 3% or more (QTFC19)

Looking across the three waves of research, TFCs consider the national Troubled Families team to be more successful at consulting and engaging stakeholders compared with 2016 (64% and 55% respectively), taking this back to the same level as in 2015 (62%).

However, TFCs are less positive about the performance of the national team at providing clear policy guidance (55% in 2017, compared with 68% in 2016), driving national policy (52% in 2017, compared with 61% in 2017) and developing effective monitoring and evaluation techniques (50% in 2016, compared with 40% in 2017).

The national programme - Summary

Overall, TFCs consider the national Troubled Families team (MHCLG) to be successful in terms of **offering support, vision, and leadership** to those delivering the Troubled Families Programme. The national team is also seen as successful in terms of **consulting and engaging stakeholders** and this has improved from 2016.

However, while still positive, there have been falls in perception of the national team's ability to provide **clear policy guidance and drive national policy**. Further, in general, views are less positive in terms of the **development of effective monitoring and evaluation techniques**.

9. Conclusions

9 Conclusions

This is the **third annual survey** of **Troubled Families Coordinators (TFCs)** involved in delivering the Troubled Families Programme. The research set out to explore their views on the level of service transformation driven by the programme alongside the impact of the family intervention approach. **Findings are mostly consistent** with those found previously – both in terms of the TFC role and their views of the programme.

Management of the programme

Most TFCs represent a **Children, young people and families team (51%)** or an **early help service (31%)**. One in five (22%) work in a **specific Troubled Families team** within their local authority. This pattern is reflected in the **delivery of the programme**, with 64% led by children's services departments, and 23% by an early help team within the local authority.

The majority of Troubled Families Co-ordinators occupy senior positions in their authority: a third (34%) are head of their service and another third (33%) are senior managers. They are **well qualified** (84% have an NVQ4+ or equivalent), are **mostly female (71%)** and **aged 45 or over (62%)**.

Half of the responding TFCs say the programme is **delivered entirely by their local authority**, rather than commissioning other agencies to manage elements. However, the **voluntary and community sector is a key partner**, providing a range of services including specialist services (26%), whole family keyworkers (24%), or step down provision (10%). Health services are commissioned to deliver in 12% of local authorities and six per cent mention the police. Typically where **other partners are commissioned to deliver elements of the programme**, they are responsible for a relatively small proportion of the service; 71% say up to 30% is delivered by other partners.

Families continue to be **mostly identified via a mixture of partner agencies and data analysis (54%)**. Those with the **greatest need and problems are most likely to be prioritised for support (47%)**. While this proportion is lower than in previous waves (59% in 2016), TFCs were presented with an expanded list of methods for prioritisation in 2017; 37% say they have the **capacity to work with all families**.

TFCs identify **children in need of help as the most important priority** for the programme in their local authority area (76%). This is followed by **domestic abuse (54%)** and **adults out of work (44%)**. These problems are prioritised over **health problems (mental and physical) (31%)**.

TFCs are **positive about workforce development** and most feel that frontline staff understand the impact of their work, clear access to shared performance incentives and training along with a shared understanding of whole family working. Reflecting this, staff are mostly felt to have the **right skills to allow them to deliver the whole family approach**, but this does vary by service area, with those working in children's social care considered best equipped (77% agree). Those in youth offending, employment and education services are also felt to mostly have the right skills, but TFCs are least confident in the police (30% agree).

Specifically in relation to **employment support**, almost all TFCs continue to say it is an integrated part of the programme (93%). However, in line with previous years, a notable minority say that it is offered too late (29%). When asked to consider how the TFEA model has been successful in improving outcomes for families, TFCs feel many features work well but particularly value the support TFEAs provide to keyworkers when discussing employment with families (84%).

Implementation of the Troubled Families programme

TFCs continue to be very supportive of the Troubled Families Programme and its key elements. Almost all (98%) say it is effective at achieving whole family working, over four in five (86%) believe that it is focused on early intervention and only slightly fewer feel it achieves data sharing between agencies and long-term positive change in families' circumstances (78% and 77% respectively).

TFCs are also positive about the programme's ability to **promote wider system reform/service transformation** (67%), but this view is not strongly held with 50% saying it is *fairly* effective. Views are less positive in terms of reducing demand for statutory services (49% effective), achieving outcome-based commissioning (44%) and cost saving (33%); all asked about for the first time in 2017.

TFCs are generally **satisfied with the commissioning process** in their LA. Most are satisfied that it is based on an assessment of local needs (75%). They also feel that it is based on evidence of what works in practice and comprehensive and reliable data (both 73%); the latter showing an increase from 2016 (previously 62%). However, they are slightly less satisfied that it is based on appropriate input from a range of agencies and cost benefit analysis (60% and 47% satisfied).

Local authorities appear to be making progress with transforming the way services work with families with complex needs, in particular more say that strong evidence and analysis of demand informs commissioning of services for families (68% agree compared with 58% in 2016) and that all agencies in the area have a common purpose, commissioning services designed to deliver whole family outcomes (54% compared with 43% in 2016). However, compared with other responses, neither of these views are not strongly held, with significant minorities unsure. Similarly, other views on leadership and governance also suggest that the model needs to embed further. For example, a quarter (26%) *strongly* agree that strong governance arrangements are in place to manage demand and deliver value for money and cost savings and three in ten (29%) are not able to express a view on this either way.

Having said that most TFCs continue to feel that **service transformation values are communicated well** and that **staff are taking ownership**, consistent with findings from 2016. In addition, there is evidence that the programme is **effecting wider system change**, for example 78% say it has influenced their approach to commissioning local authority services more widely. They also mostly agree that partner services have been influenced by the programme's approach, but the influence on voluntary and community services is felt to be less pronounced (74% and 56%).

Areas for development

The Troubled Families Programme aims to bring about change in the delivery and management of local services for families. TFCs continue to be positive about these changes, but as with the findings from 2015 and 2016, the research does identify some persistent challenges.

Embedding service transformation: there is good evidence of progress in terms of local agencies' shared commitment to transforming the way services work with families with complex needs and whole family working. In particular, there have been improvements in evidence of analysis of demand informing commissioning, a sense of common purpose between agencies and the use of outcomes evidence to drive delivery and improve performance. However, in many cases these views are not strongly held and significant minorities continue to be unsure. Further, while senior leaders' commitment is praised, there appears to be a greater need for better data systems and sharing and links to wider local and national transformation programmes, particularly in adult social care.

Continued evidence of positive impact on commissioning of services: TFCs are positive about local commissioning practices, feeling they are based on local need and what works in practice, and more feel commissioning is based on comprehensive and reliable data and that local agencies have a common purpose commissioning services to deliver whole family outcomes. It will be interesting to note whether these improvements can be sustained. In addition, TFCs are less sure about whether commissioning is based on cost benefit analysis or how effective their local programme is at achieving outcome-based commissioning, suggesting areas for improvement.

Access to data: TFCs are positive about the use of data as evidence for commissioning and feel that the data is reliable but they are less positive about the ability to access this data on demand, suggesting improvements to data sharing and systems are required.

Addressing skills gaps: staff working in children's social care are felt to be best equipped to deliver the whole family approach. However, for other services there is evidence of a skills gap, particularly among the police, but for a range of services including employment, education, health and housing at least one in four are unsure whether staff have the right skills. While most programmes are led by children, young people and families services, it is important that whole family skills are developed in other partner services too. Developing these skills may have wider impact, for example, on commissioning of services in the voluntary and community sector, contributing to broader system-led change.

Employment support: there is a potential mismatch between the perceptions of TFCs and those of keyworkers in terms of employment support. TFCs suggest the TFEA model has been most successful in terms of the support they provide to keyworkers when discussing employment with families, but three quarters (73%) of keyworkers say they would like more information on employment support and how it can help the families they work with.

Cuts to core services and bureaucracy: the main challenge to delivery of the programme continues to be cuts to/capacity problems in core services; this is consistent with findings from both 2015 and 2016. However, payment by results remains high on the agenda, and in 2017 more mention too much bureaucracy and being too data driven, with less focus on ambitious targets and the number of families to reach.

Rachel Williams

Research Director

rachel.williams@ipsos.com

Holly Kitson

Research Executive

holly.kitson@ipsos.com

For more information

3 Thomas More Square
London
E1W 1YW

t: +44 (0)20 3059 5000

www.ipsos-mori.com

<http://twitter.com/IpsosMORI>

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