



Children's Cross Regional Arrangements Group

PARTNERSHIP NEWS – July 2018

Dear Local Authority Colleagues,

THE PARTNERSHIP: It was great to see so many of you at the National Commissioning Conference in Derby this year. CCRAG presented a workshop on the new streamlined outcome focussed monitoring process and introduced the new CCRAG Risk Assessment Tool. The tool clearly identifies risk and prioritises the need for a visit. It allows Local Authority Partners to evidence their decision making to Ofsted and ensures resources are appropriately allocated. Feedback to date has been positive and we have welcomed a few suggestions on how to improve the tool further. Following our workshop we had discussions with several potential new Partners so hope to take this forward over the next few months.

A number of people asked how they know which Local Authorities are CCRAG Partners. There is a full list available on the CCRAG website but we would encourage CCRAG Partners to use the CCRAG Logo on their email signature and add a link to the CCRAG Website. The logo is available on the information sharing portal of the database.

In our last Newsletter, we advised that we were in discussions with senior managers from the West London Alliance with a view to seeing how our work complements one another and whether there are any opportunities. There was agreement that this could potentially be an opportunity going forward but CCRAG does not have the resources to explore this further at the current time.

CCRAG is continuing to support a piece of work being undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council looking to create a National Sufficiency Amnesty in relation to Fostering and Children's Residential Provision. Hertfordshire held workshops in April and presented at the National Commissioning Conference. Local Authorities have supplied their placement data to Hertfordshire and the results show that by closer collaboration we could potentially make a real difference trying to keep our young people closer to home. You do not need to be a CCRAG Partner to take part in this initiative, however there are obvious synergies between the two projects and we are potentially looking at ways the CCRAG database could be used to alert Local Authorities when placements are due to become available in their local area. If you would like further details, please contact lisa.tank@hertfordshire.gov.uk

We have previously advised that we were looking at the potential options regarding the future of the CCRAG database. We have been contacted by several non CCRAG Partner Local Authorities who are interested in potentially coming together to re-commission a service that meets national needs. There are several options available to us. We are not looking at commissioning a resource from scratch as there are providers out there that already have the basic outline and basic functionality of what is needed. We would be looking to create a specification with interested parties to ensure we create a system that meets the requirements of all CCRAG Local Authority Partners. The final specification will depend on the number of Local Authorities involved as this will ultimately define our budget.

One of the overriding messages at the National Commissioning Conference and the recent report by Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers is the needs for effective partnership working. CCRAG continues to look at any innovative ideas and would be happy to facilitate the sharing of best practice with colleagues at any of our Partnership Events. If there is something that you feel you have done well, we would encourage you not to keep it to yourself but to share your ideas to save another Local Authority / Provider re-inventing the wheel.

CCRAG will be presenting at a Making Research Count Event on 13th July 2018 in Leeds on "Improving Outcomes for Looked After Children using evidence based practice and commissioning". As part of this work, we will be talking about our work with Dr Mark Kerr (Centre of Outcomes of Care) and the work we continue to undertake to get a much better understanding of the price of care and our commitment to continuing this work stream. We are looking to work alongside providers to get a clear understanding of the price of care and explore opportunities for regional commissioning to deliver value for money.

The Voice of the Child remains high on the agenda in all CCRAG work streams. This is one of the biggest indicators of wellbeing that we have. We are starting to look at the synergies between our work on the price of care, how this links to outcomes and how we incorporate this into our work co-producing a new PRF with the market. We are aware a few new versions of PRFs have started to spring up and we would encourage anyone who feels they have got it right to share their thoughts with us as getting it right nationally can only be a benefit to both providers and local authorities. It will also ensure that we are all focusing on achieving better outcomes for children and young people living away from home and to create efficiencies across the board.


UPCOMING CCRAG EVENTS: Our next CCRAG Partnership Event is due to take place in Stevenage on 19th September 2018. The agenda has yet to be agreed but we are looking at holding another Meet the Commissioner session following positive feedback in Bath. Currently the theme is Effective Communication – Including Voice of the Child / Local Authority / Provider. We will update you as soon as we have an agreed agenda. The event is offered Free of Charge to all existing CCRAG Local Authority & Provider Partners. Provider Partners have signed up to the CCRAG

Partnership and paid their annual subscription fee of £250 per person per annum. If you are a provider that has yet to sign up you are welcome to attend the event but this will be charged at £150 which will entitle you to attend CCRAG events up until the end of 2018.

As the agenda is yet to be finalised if you have any suggestions for topics or know of any inspirational speakers, please let us know. If we cannot incorporate them on this occasion, it's always good to have ideas in the pipeline for the next one.

We are also looking for volunteers for the working groups identified on the Calendar of Events shown below. We appreciate time is precious but we are hoping that each CCRAG Local Authority will put themselves forward for at least one of the Working Groups. If there is a particular work area you are interested in we would be pleased to hear from you. As soon as we have a few volunteers we will look at a mutually convenient time and location to meet.

Calendar of Events 2018

Event	Date	Venue	Objectives / Outcomes	Invitation
Making Research Count Seminar – Dr Mark Kerr – Centre of Outcomes of Care (Not a CCRAG Event) To book, email spsw-mrc@york.ac.uk	13 th July 2018 9am – 3:15pm	Cloth Hall Court - Leeds Beckett University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship between needs, price and outcomes for looked after children. Speakers, who view the problem through different, but complimentary lenses. Speakers will outline how they are responding to the challenges. Speakers Include - Dr Miriam Silver, Dr Mark Kerr, The Mulberry Bush School, iMPOWER & CCRAG 	All Interested Local Authorities & Provider Reps  MK_MRC 13th July 2018 Working Progra
CCRAG Partnership Event – To Book Your Place Click Here	19 th Sept 2018	The Oak Room – Herts Development Centre, Stevenage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme “The Voice” – The Child, The Provider, The Local Authority Speakers include Jonathan Fingerhut (TBC) Potential Opportunity to Meet The Commissioner Opportunity to Network with LA & Provider colleagues 	CCRAG LAs & Providers – 100 spaces available (Book early to avoid disappointment)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future opportunities 	
Hertfordshire County Council Residential Outcome Event (Not a CCRAG Event)	15 th October 2019	Blackstone Auditorium - Stevenage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda to follow 	All Residential Service Providers
PRF Working Group	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build trust and relationships between LAs and providers • To Co-Produce a PRF which is strengths based and articulate the needs of the child, rather than focussed on risks, which lead to more effective matching of placements • A PRF that clearly defines primary need and allows LAs to ensure the correct allocation of funding by Social Care and Health (Including Mental Health) • A digital PRF that provides meaningful placement data across the Partnership to allow LAs and Providers to work together to fill the gaps in the market and ensure we are able to meet the changing needs of our CLA populations. 	CCRAG LAs & Provider Reps
Outcome Framework Working Group & Links to Value of Care	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build trust and relationships between LAs and providers • Putting into practice the evidence-based Outcome Framework and links to monitoring procedures 	CCRAG LAs & Provider Reps
Monitoring Procedures Working Group	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build trust and relationships between LAs and providers • Updates to current procedure, including links to outcome framework. • Finalise the development of a RAG rating system to ensure efficient and effective targeting of monitoring visits. 	CCRAG LAs & Provider Reps

South West Provider Forum (Not a CCRAAG Event)	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider engagement event hosted by SW Local Authorities 	South West LAs & Potentially CCRAAG representatives
CCRAAG Fee Process Working Group	TBA	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build trust and relationships between LA's and providers Produce a new approach to the current fee procedure which is outcome-focussed and child-centric. 	CCRAAG LAs & Provider Reps
Steering Group Meeting(s)	18 th Sept 2018 1 st Dec 2018 14 th March 2018 6 th June 2018	Farnham House – Stevenage Conference Facilities will be available for those unable to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meeting to discuss CCRAAG development plan 	CCRAAG Steering Group Members

PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT: In our last newsletter, we announced the need for CCRAAG to introduce a small provider subscription fee to cover the costs incurred for larger venues and increased catering. We are really pleased that so many providers signed up and feedback has been positive. Provider registration and access to the database continues to remain free of charge. Since our last newsletter, a further 97 provisions have registered their services taking us up to 2407 in total. These figures exclude Independent Fostering Agencies. We are hoping to be able to update you on our progress with the IFA Portal in our next newsletter.

Just a reminder, CCRAAG is happy for Local Authority and provider partners to use our logo to let others know that you are working in partnership with us. This is not an endorsement, but rather an opportunity to share with others that LAs and providers are working together. There are two versions of the CCRAAG logo (colour and black and white). The colour logo is the preferred version and should be used on all communication. For example, on all colour print communications, signage, web, livery and exhibition stands. Both versions of the logo are available by emailing CCRAAG@hertfordshire.gov.uk

DATABASE UPDATES: CCRAG have been contacting providers to ensure that where possible vacancies and services offered are up to date to aid matching. CCRAG creates pages for all new Ofsted registered provision on a monthly basis. It is equally important that each Local Authority Partner takes ownership for improving the quality of the information held on CCRAG to share the workload. Please continue to have discussions with providers where records appear to be out of date. If providers have yet to register on the database, CCRAG can easily add them to existing Ofsted records once they have signed up. It only takes a few minutes. Any questions, please direct them to CCRAG@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

We are hoping to go live with new functionality on 11th July 2018. This includes updates to the Provider datastore. This will allow providers to upload and delete their own documents when they are out of date, meaning those who own the information can ensure that it is accurate. We have also added a Provider Information Sharing Portal so providers will have quick and easy access to all our Policies, Procedures and Newsletters. They will also have the opportunity to comment, which will be an excellent way to take account of their views.

The Idox contract is due for renewal in January 2019 and as you know we have been in discussions with several alternative providers. This combined with interest from large Regional Partnerships means that progress is very slow due to the large number of Stakeholders. Please be assured, we are moving forward with this and the Steering Group will update you as soon as any decisions have been made.

MONITORING VISITS: Hopefully you have now all had the opportunity to undertake monitoring visits using the new CCRAG monitoring documents. If there are any areas where you think this can be improved, please put yourself forward as part of the CCRAG Monitoring Procedures Working Group.

The CCRAG Risk Assessment Tool is being utilised by most Local Authority Partners but we are still waiting on Risk Rating and visit dates from a number of you. We will be chasing these up over the next few weeks so if you can get these to us it will save us a job!

We have updated the CCRAG documentation so it now incorporates monitoring for IFAs. We used the learning from serious case reviews and the findings in the Sir Martin Narey report. A copy of the new document is available via the Information Sharing Portal.

FEE UPLIFT PROCEDURES: The position for CCRAG for 2018/19 remains unchanged, with any requests received being considered on an individual basis, they will still need strong evidence to support the request prior to any agreement being given.

STEERING GROUP NEWS: We recently said goodbye to our Chairperson Jacqueline Gear, Senior Commissioning Manager for Hertfordshire but are pleased to welcome Martha Moroney who has taken up the baton. Andi Rule has changed

roles within Milton Keynes and with a heavy heart, has had to take a step back. She will still be involved in CCRAAG as a Lead Officer for Milton Keynes, but is no longer able to commit to the Steering Group. Also, we said goodbye to Andrew James who has recently left Luton and is starting his own venture. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Andi, Andrew and Jacqueline for their contributions to CCRAAG.

On a positive note, we are pleased to advise that we have 3 new Steering Group Members, namely Lucy Loia (Cambridgeshire), Nicholas Marco-Wadey (West Sussex) and Rosie De-Boateng (Newham). We look forward to working with them to ensure that CCRAAG continues to innovate and develop throughout 2018 and beyond.

The CCRAAG Steering Group
CCRAAG@hertfordshire.gov.uk

