Measuring the costs and outcomes of short break services for disabled children and their families in the UK

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Measuring the costs and outcomes of short break services for disabled children and their families in the UK

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Presentation Overview

This session will:

• Explore the complexities of capturing and measuring the costs of short breaks for disabled children and their families in the UK
• Explore the complexities of capturing and measuring outcomes achieved by disabled children and their families accessing short breaks in the UK
• Examine the effectiveness of ‘hub’ models of delivery
• Demonstrate how information on the costs and outcomes and be bought together to inform effective commissioning
The costs and outcomes programme at CCFR

- Understanding the links between costs, needs and outcomes
  - Introducing transparency
  - Comparing like with like
  - Bottom up costing methodology
- Comprehensive costs
  - Combines costs of different types of services with the costs of worker ‘activity’
  - Understanding overheads
- Stream of work exploring the costs and outcomes of short break services for disabled children and their families
  - DfE funded study: bottom up costs of short breaks
  - Exploring the outcomes of Action for Children short break services
  - Comparing the costs of short break services
Previous research: Variations in the costs of short break services

• Variations according to:
  – The provider
  – The type of service
  – The type and number of staff required
  – The length of the activity
  – The number of children attending
  – The needs of the children attending
  – The locality of the service
  – The time the service was delivered
  – The type of social care activity associated with the service
## Costs of short breaks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service type</th>
<th>Average cost per child</th>
<th>Range (per child)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential overnight</td>
<td>£437.94 / $684.63 per night</td>
<td>£427.66 - £782.55 / $668.55 - $1,223.34 per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster family based overnights</td>
<td>£230.47 / $359.56 per night</td>
<td>£139.39 - £309.29 / $217.83 - $483.35 per night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community: Groups</td>
<td>£40.15 / $62.77 per hour</td>
<td>£15.27 - £71.59 / $23.86 – $111.88 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Activities</td>
<td>£15.82 / $24.73 per hour</td>
<td>£1.28 - £44.13 / $2.00 - $68.97 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community: Access to Leisure</td>
<td>£23.42 / $23.42 per hour</td>
<td>£6.86 - £60.59 / $10.72 - $94.69 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school clubs</td>
<td>£20.55 / $32.13 per hour</td>
<td>£8.59 - £11.60 / $13.42 - $18.13 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domiciliary</td>
<td>£26.42 / $41.30 per hour</td>
<td>£20.00 - £32.83 / $31.25- $51.31 per hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overhead calculations

• Those costs associated with the overall functioning of the organisation eg. office running costs, buildings maintenance etc.
• 15% of salary widely used in social care
• Selwyn et al (2009) suggest that 15% underestimates overheads
• Average 36.6%
• Developed a framework for the calculation of overheads which introduces
  – Consistency
  – Transparency
• Useful for making cost comparisons
Drivers for costs

• The needs of the children
  – Staffing ratios
  – Equipment and training of staff
  – Can be highly variable

• Service type
  – Activity costs

• Staffing
  – Actual and relative costs

• Management costs

• The costs of commissioning

• Linking costs to Value
# Understanding Children’s Needs to Inform Staffing Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>No additional support required</th>
<th>Some Assistance required</th>
<th>Some assistance required</th>
<th>Moderate Assistance required</th>
<th>Significant Assistance required at all times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;15 min of staff time</td>
<td>&lt;30 minutes of staff time</td>
<td>&lt;60 minutes of staff time</td>
<td>&lt;90 minutes of staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If &gt; 90 minutes of staff time please enter value in minutes below and explain in notebox below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The method of a young person's communication. (Assistive technology, computer programmes, PECS, signing, widgets & body language)
Cost and Value

• How is “value for money” defined?
  – Outcomes?
  – Experience and expertise of staff?
  – Training?
  – Ongoing support?
• Shorter term contracts
• Value for money or lowest cost?
Delivering a short break hub model

• Foster Care short breaks
• Pathway projects and inclusion
• Peer befriending
• Residential activity holidays
• Transition Support
• Domiciliary Care
• After school care
• Holiday and weekend activity groups
• Intensive Family Support
• Sibling support
• Parenting skills e.g. behaviour support; sleep management
# Hub services: An example of value for money?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost type</th>
<th>Hub Services</th>
<th>Other Action for Children Services</th>
<th>Average Other Action for Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Family Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hub Services</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Family Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee related</td>
<td>79.11</td>
<td>75.99</td>
<td>79.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client related</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency function</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment</td>
<td>17.87</td>
<td>23.06</td>
<td>19.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shared learning: key information

• Data
  – Consistency in the data provided
  – Understanding full cost recovery
    – Foster Family overnight short breaks
    – Personal budgets

• Comparing like with like
  – Understanding the services
  – Understanding the children

• Understanding outputs
Measuring outcomes
Measuring outcomes: The complexity of the picture

• The issue: Variety
  – The needs and circumstances of children accessing short breaks
  – The types of short break provision on offer

• The solution: Gathering of baseline data
  – Categorisation of needs and impairments
    – Subcategories “Mild Moderate and Severe”
  – Identification of individual smart targets
    – Sub-categories within each outcome area
Examples of Outcomes

• The child/young person knows about risks to their safety and how to deal with them
• Improvement in emotional wellbeing
• Parents/Carers capacity to cope with difficulties is enhanced
• Engages safely in a leisure activity of their choice
• Views are sought, heard and contribute to decision making
• Social skills improve
• Communication skills improve
• There is an improvement in practical life skills
## Example: Use and analysis of SMART target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action for Children Outcomes Framework Outcome</th>
<th>SMART Target</th>
<th>Outcome subcategory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in practical life skills</td>
<td>I would like to do more for myself. Please help me to make snacks and look after my belongings</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eat meals independently</td>
<td>Eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brushing own hair (three strokes)</td>
<td>Dressing/Personal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please help me use my Big Mack switch to switch on appliances e.g. the bubble machine and food processor.</td>
<td>Big Mack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would like to pay for my own choice of sweet or snack at the local shop</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: Use and analysis of SMART targets
Measuring outcomes: Wider impact: taking small steps

• The Issue: The “Spoon Scenario”
  – “soft outcomes”
  – small or slow progress

• The solution: contextualisation
  – Baseline data and “distance travelled”
  – Understanding the impact of the outcome achieved
  – Survey and interview data
    – Routine analysis of the wider impact
Jack and Mary’s story

• 16 years old increasingly isolated: communication & interaction difficult

• Interest in art, drama and horse riding supported to do both weekly

• Support staff gradually withdrew as Jack’s confidence increased

• Social & communication skills increased & interest in script writing

• Went on to lead improvisation session at drama group

• Mary has a break and walks the dog, goes to café and a night class

• Mary’s emotional wellbeing improves & more optimistic about Jack’s future
Jack and Mary’s story

‘We [parents] went to his parents’ evening at school and they said, “oh, we’re really pleased because I don’t know what’s happened, but suddenly, he’s initiating conversations” which was always the problem, because of the shyness, people would say ‘hello’ [and] he’d turn his head away, back away.’
Using costs and outcomes to inform commissioning
Linking costs to needs and outcomes

• Variations in costs
  ~ according to needs
  ~ according to service type
  ~ based on local policies and procedures
• Do the most expensive interventions and services produce the best outcomes?
• Least positive outcomes and highest costs for children with complex needs
  ~ Could services have been provided earlier?
  ~ Have decisions been delayed
  ~ Do services need to continue for longer?
Financial Savings from Short Break Support: England

£174 million if short breaks were effectively delivered to all those eligible to receive them

Based on the following data:

• Decreased cost of long-term residential care from reductions in the number of disabled children placed outside of the family home: £135 million

• Decreased cost to health services from reduction in parents’, families’ and carers’ stress: £18 million

• Decrease cost to schools of educating siblings with behavioural and emotional difficulties: £21 million

For the full report, which includes the methodology of this work, please see: www.actionforchildren.org.uk/valueofshortbreaks
The commissioning environment

• External providers offer:
  – Knowledge and expertise
  – Value for money

• Providers selected by:
  – Outcomes
  – Demonstrable quality and expertise
  – Value for money

• ‘Success’ measured by:
  – Outcomes
  – Value for money
## Selecting Short Break Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable quality and expertise</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost: value for money</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to deliver required outputs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good references</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost: transparency in costs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being known to the authority</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well written bid</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost: lowest cost</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes Based Commissioning

Children should have -

• the opportunity to mix with peers (and make friends)
• have new experiences
• be able to stay away from home
• the opportunity to develop team skills
• the chance to rate the activities they do
• gain a sense of achievement

http://www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk/policyandpractice/impact/casestudies/commissioning
Reporting Outputs and Outcomes

Action for Children’s Report Cards
Thank You

http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/policy-research/research

www.cccfr.org.uk