**NES AHP Contribution to Public Health**

Meeting with Claire Curtis, AHP Early Intervention & Improvement Lead, NHS Tayside

24 February 2022

**Background to Claire’s post**

It was identified in Child Health that the Operational Managers lacked the capacity to give the service development components of the role enough time and support, despite the will to do so and lots of creative ideas. Therefore it was felt that having a specific service development role would be useful so that's why Claire’s role was created and an early intervention slant was put on it because the value of that for the Child Health service had been identified. The Child Health service has gone through five years of transformational change in relation to [Ready to Act](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2016/01/ready-act-transformational-plan-children-young-people-parents-carers-families/documents/00492486-pdf/00492486-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00492486.pdf?forceDownload=true). They had already done lots changes to the service that allowed them to work in a three tier model: universal, targeted and specialist. Universal for the whole community, targeted for specific groups of people within our communities and the specialist provisions of the three professions (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy) in the child health teams. They do have contact with other AHP services such as Podiatry and Dietetics within the Child Health Network.

Claire’s role started exactly at the start of the pandemic so the ability to do what she wanted to do with the role was limited because of deployment. It is a 0.6 WTE role, with a local and national focus within that. Claire is there to support the teams to move projects forward. The aim is to have a focus on early intervention but it does span across all of the service development work so she is involved in measuring specialist interventions as well. The role is not ring-fenced for early intervention and prevention but there is a focus on that.

There are lots of universal and targeted projects running within child health and Claire focused on four of them.

1. **Somewhere Over the Rainbow** was a fun, interactive and engaging session providing information from Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Nutrition & Dietetics. The session included ages and stages of typical child development and focused on how to encourage parents to support their child’s development (pre-birth to 5 years) through 3 key messages “Talk, Play and Explore”. The session was suitable for anyone working with children and/or their families. This training is no longer offered, not because it wasn’t of value, but it was felt the messages it delivered had been integrated into all of their work. They are all intertwined into all of the universal and targeted offerings. The work had a lot of quality improvement basis to it and it has been written up.
2. The service is really active on **social media**, with a presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and within that they have created different training sessions and resources for universal and targeted offerings.
3. **Advice line** - originally started a couple of years ago by SLT team and it is aimed at both parents and professionals. As part of the response to the pandemic, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy became part of the advice line too. Therefore it now a three-profession advice line. There is a quality improvement thread through it. When it was first established, a survey was done with parents to identify what were the most useful times for them to be able to access the advice line. It runs on one morning a week and one evening a week, just after working hours. It is an advice line for anyone that has any concerns. Health visitors and teachers are encouraged to support families to call the advice line themselves to have discuss their concerns but Health visitors and teachers can call as well. The therapists do not open a duty of care, just provide advice but if further input is required, would advise on how to go about doing that. It is one phone number and callers are asked if they wish to speak to a Physiotherapist, Speech & Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist and then they are directed to the appropriate professional. The advice line uses a data collection template to capture data with consent, which allows exploration of the data and evaluation of the service.
4. There is a new **Early Intervention and Prevention AHP Network** that meets termly, which has a rep from each AHP profession and a rep from each Health Board. Ruth Campbell is a member of the network. The focus of the network is to share projects that are ongoing so that they can look at involvement nationally, spreading scale, a once for Scotland approach. Also look at sharing resources so that people are not constantly creating the same thing in different areas. There is support and a quality improvement focus through it.

**What would support AHPs to become more involved in Public Health work?**

Claire identified that it would be useful to have support with how to measure work that is based in a public health forum. She feels that in her service, they are really fantastic at looking at universal and targeted offerings but how that truly fits within a public health model is work for everybody going forward, to get a real sense of that and how it's measured and what they do with it. It is complex measuring it; it is different from anything else that they do. Because of those longer term outcomes, how do you capture that, what you're doing now from an early intervention perspective? Knowing how to capture the impact of work is challenging so there is learning there from Public Health. Would love to be able to show more data to support that early impact. Would like to get more upskilled around this, looking forward to that being implemented.

**Contribution to wider determinants**

The Early Intervention and Prevention AHP Network will aim to identify key factors nationally that they could influence and support in terms of strategy. Claire sits on a national meeting that is looking at the vision for child health over the next three years.

Claire feels that the Implementation Plan is a really important project. “I'm really happy that the time and money is being given to do this work. Fingers crossed there will be really good positive things come out of the launch in March”

**Further input**

Claire consented to being contacted again for further involvement in this work if appropriate claire.curtis11@nhs.scot

**Sheila Wilson**

**2 March 2022**