



update

for practitioners

ISSUE 1 - JULY 2009

He mahi taahi tātou working together for children and young people with high and complex needs

Kia ora tatou

Welcome to the first HCN Unit Update for Practitioners. Practitioners who attended our National Practitioner Forum last October suggested that bi-annual updates would be of interest.

Our suggestion that we might work with Interagency Management Groups at a local level to help run regional or local Practitioners Forums also met with your approval. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do this yet, but we have not forgotten the idea. This year we will hold a regional practitioners forum in Wellington on 20 November with an emphasis on clarifying the HCN application and plan development processes. Dates for other regions will be advised.

About HCN funded clients

The majority of HCN funded clients are aged 10-19 years old at application and have, on average:

- 4-5 adverse life experiences, including:
 - abuse and neglect
 - domestic violence
 - multiple caregiver placements
 - parental alcohol and drug abuse
 - multiple school placements
- 3-4 diagnoses, including:
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - Conduct Disorder
 - Intellectual Disability
 - Autistic Spectrum Disorder
 - Oppositional Defiant Disorder
 - Attachment Disorder
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- 4-5 problem behaviours, including:
 - violence
 - social difficulties with peers
 - property damage
 - absconding
 - sexualised behaviours
 - self harming
 - alcohol and drug abuse
 - suspension/exclusion from school

Clarifying the HCN funding process

We commonly hear that the HCN process is too hard, too complex and too long. While the clients HCN funding targets are complex and need more work than some other cases, the HCN processes should not add to the complexity. We have therefore worked to clarify exactly what is required and what needs to be in place to support your work with your most complex clients.

There are two stages to applying for HCN funding.

The first stage occurs when you initially consider that HCN funding may help. At this stage, you need to:

- work with your supervisor and/or manager to identify which other agencies are (or should be) engaged in supporting the young person. As well as the three contributing agencies - CYF, Education (most usually GSE) and health (most usually CAMHS and/or disability sector) - you need to consider the roles of agencies such as Work and Income, ACC, Workbridge, Youth Transition Services, etc.
- ensure you, and the other agencies involved, have an up-to-date assessment of what is needed to meet the young person's needs
- be clear about what has already been done to try to meet the young person's needs, what has worked, what hasn't, and why
- work with your interagency colleagues to complete the Case Presentation template and present the case to your local Interagency Management Group.

The second stage is the application process. The purpose of an application for HCN funding is to demonstrate to the Application Panel that the young person has needs that have been ongoing for more than a year and that:

- the young person has not responded to the supports usually accessed through local agencies

- their needs cannot be met by what is available through local agencies
- the young person is likely to benefit from an interagency team approach.

Each agency needs to provide the Application Panel with the following:

History

- an overview from your agency's perspective of the significant events that have occurred for this young person and a concise description of how their behaviours have developed over time
- describe what has been tried, what has worked, what hasn't, and why
- if recommendations have been made and not actioned, explain why.

Current Situation

- the key issues (including current assessment findings) that inform what is happening now– what supports are in place for the young person, how successful they are, and what, specifically, is considered to be contributing to the young person's presentation at this time.

Comment

- your agency's opinion about approaches and supports required to make a positive change for the young person - which of these can be supported by your agency, which are unmet needs and why.

Why now?

- This section should be a statement from the interagency team that explains to the Panel why it feels that an interagency plan would be particularly beneficial for the young person at this point in time.

The interagency plan development process

Once an application has been approved by the HCN Plan Approval Panel, a Services Coordinator is available to support the interagency team work together to identify the priority areas that need to be addressed, and the most appropriate interventions to meet needs.

The team process is vital to the success of an interagency plan, and each team member has a valuable contribution to make.

We have closely analysed nearly 100 closed plans and looked at what contributes to good client outcomes. Key features are:

- the engagement of the young person
- a shared understanding of what needs to be addressed and how
- a shared understanding of potential barriers to progress, and team planning to address them
- identification of specific, measurable and achievable goals
- identification of targeted, individualised outcome measurement tools
- good understanding of team members' roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan.

Our [Team Planning Resources](#) (available on the HCN website) are designed to help practitioners address these areas. We hope that these resources will be useful to you not only when working with HCN clients, but also in your usual case work. Please have a look and let us know if you find them useful, or how we might add to them.

What teams have said about interagency plans:

"I don't know of another case where the team is so cohesive. The benefit for [child] is that we feel supported by one another and gain energy from this to keep going through the hard times."

"The team collaboration and guidance from the clinical advisor has allowed for shared decision making and the development of consistent, successful management strategies for [child]."

"With such a complex case, working in this [collaborative] manner is more supportive - there is no one person having to carry the whole load and everyone is always fully informed."

"The HCN process has been a huge factor in the success. We now feel much better placed to move forward through the adolescent years."

"The benefits have so far outweighed any barriers."

You can also read [case summaries](#) on the HCN website.

I hope you found this Practitioners Update useful. As it was our first, I would really appreciate your feedback. Please email me at:

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Me mahi tahi tātou

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