



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

HSS(OSSGUIDE/RIT)3-2008

Development Strategy for Personal Social Services Staff in Children's Services

Guidance for Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

February 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was written by members of a working group chaired by **Elsbeth Rea**, as part of the reform of children's services and as a follow up to the Child Protection Inspection published by the Social Services Inspectorate in January 2007.

Special thanks is extended to Christine Smyth for her contribution and support.

FOREWORD

This strategy has been developed to ensure that Health and Social Care Trusts develop their workforce in order to deliver better outcomes for children. Whilst the strategy is primarily for staff in the personal social services who work with children, it does recommend development priorities for staff in other disciplines and agencies.

This guidance is being issued at a time of significant change within children's services and for this reason a formal review of the document will be undertaken 12 months after the date of issue.

Equality

This report can be made available on request, on disk, in large print, via email, in Braille, on audiocassette or in minority languages for anyone not fluent in English.

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DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES STAFF IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Background and Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The reform of children's services in Northern Ireland was announced in March 2006 following a number of high profile child protection cases and inquiries in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, all of which demonstrated the need for system improvement.

The outcomes of the inspections of child protection services, carried out by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) between 2004 and 2006 and reported on in the overview report *'Our children and young people - our shared responsibility'* (DHSSPS/SSI, December 2006), provided further evidence of the need for change and among its recommendations concluded that: -

'There now needs to be a comprehensive and sustained programme of change established with all key stakeholders. Significant co-ordinated regional action is required to deliver the necessary high quality services needed to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland'

In February 2007 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) initiated a further audit of compliance to the recommendations of Lord Laming's report into the death of Victoria Climbié. As a follow up to the 2003 audit, the exercise was designed to review the implementation of the recommendations of the Laming Report by statutory agencies and the improvement of systems to safeguard children across Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts. A final report will be produced by the DHSSPS in early 2008.

The consultative document *'Care Matters in Northern Ireland - A Bridge to a Better Future'* was launched in March 2007 and sets out Government plans to meet the challenge of improving services for all children including those Looked After. It is derived from the Green paper of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in England in order to develop a strategy which will work best in Northern Ireland. The document builds on reforms in relation to new structures and processes in frontline services and on the outcome of the Child Protection Inspection Report. These are complemented by investment in children's services through the Children and Young People's Funding package and the overarching 10-year Children's Strategy and Anti-Poverty Strategy of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM).

1.2 Review of Public Administration

The reform process is being undertaken at a time of fundamental organisational change, and the impact of the Reform of Public Administration (RPA) on the motivation and confidence of the workforce cannot be under-estimated. The strategy that follows must, therefore, be realistic in terms of the capacity of organisations and staff to deliver on it.

Priorities have therefore been identified to ensure that essential development activity to support the implementation of the reforms is planned and delivered. It is also important to recognise that all the development areas that have been identified, including the priorities, are not necessarily additional to those already identified and undertaken by staff in Boards and Trusts. In some instances, the appropriate action may be to update and revise existing policy, procedures and guidance and ensure appropriate management support and supervision to implement the revised guidance. It is for Boards and Trusts to ensure that the necessary resources to support workforce development are secured and that priority is given to this reform process.

1.3 Reform of Child Protection Services

The Reform Implementation Team (RIT) project was initiated to reform child protection services within the new Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in order to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland. It has created the means by which reform can be implemented and is supporting the process of reform by making explicit what is required to be in place.

Building on the learning from child protection inquiries and inspections and also drawing on the findings from Case Management Reviews, the project has sought to create a mechanism through which a consistent and viable model for the delivery of child protection services will be defined and implemented.

Through a project management approach 10 working groups were established, each focussing on aspects of child care practice and management that require change. These include:

- Consistent job descriptions and grades;
- Uniform supervision model;
- Common administrative systems including case recording;
- Introducing a common assessment framework;
- Information systems that are effective;
- Quality assurance mechanism to support good practice;
- Common standards and thresholds for services; and
- An agreed caseload weighting system.

1.4 Regional Review of Residential Child Care Services

The findings of the Overview Report of the Child Protection Inspections also highlighted worrying inconsistencies in practice and approaches to the discharge of statutory functions across Trusts. Within the residential sector there were inconsistent approaches to assessment, in particular in relation to assessment of risk and the provision of appropriate therapeutic supports.

A review of residential child care has been commissioned by the Children Matter Taskforce in order to consider these issues and to review the strategic direction of residential child care services as set out in the Children Matter strategy document published in 2000. The project aims to ensure that reforms in wider children's services are reflected in the residential child care sector. A strategy will be produced for improvements in residential child care services which, through effective management and appropriate safeguards, will ensure high quality standards of services delivering positive outcomes for children and young people. The project will establish a mechanism for informing the development of an improved and effective model of care across the range of differentiated residential child care provision.

The stated aims of the project will be delivered through 6 dedicated work streams, as follows:

1. Review of staffing levels, qualifications and skill mix across differentiated residential units;
2. Review of care planning arrangements and processes across the residential sector;
3. Review of Advocacy and mentoring arrangements within residential child care;
4. Review of the continuum of residential child care;
5. Review of the interface between residential care and juvenile justice; and
6. Review of the needs assessment for residential child care and mapping of existing provision.

1.5 Regulation of the Workforce

The reform programme is being undertaken at a time of significant change for staff in the professions within health and social services, with changes in organisational structures, pay arrangements and the strengthening of vetting and regulatory arrangements.

Regulation has impacted on the social work profession in the following ways. Since the implementation of the Protection of Title of social worker from 1 June 2005, all social workers in designated posts are required to be registered on the social work part of the register with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) in order to be allowed to practise. All managers and care staff in residential child care facilities are also required to be registered with the NISCC. There is an ongoing programme introducing registration for the social care workforce which is planned to be complete by 2011. A social care worker registered with the NISCC is bound to keep the NISCC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers and employers of social care workers are also bound to keep a Code of Practice. For social workers, this includes a requirement to take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills. Employers must provide training and development opportunities to enable staff to strengthen and develop their knowledge and skills. Evidence of continuing learning and development is a requirement for re-registration with the NISCC. At present all registrants are required to undertake a minimum of 15 days of training and learning every 3 years to remain eligible to re-register.

Regulated staff from other professions will also have registration and re-registration requirements specified by their respective regulatory bodies.

In addition, all staff in Health Social Care Trusts are now required to complete the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) Performance and Development Joint Review on an annual basis. This Review provides an opportunity for staff to reflect on their knowledge, skills and values in a structured way, focusing on those required for their job profile. The line manager completes a formal performance review which includes an assessment of practice examples which have been identified to meet the requirements.

It has been agreed by the NISCC that the completed KSF Performance Review form may be used to meet the post- registration requirements for the NISCC. Development and training undertaken as part of the reform process may also be used to meet these requirements.

2. Development Strategy

2.1 Introduction

The implementation of the reform programme requires a whole-system approach. Responsibility for ensuring that the reforms are adopted and translated into definitive action lies with the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts themselves. The capacity of staff to implement the changes into practice will be central to the success of the reform programme. **Appendix 1** highlights the centrality of the workforce and also demonstrates that the responsibility for the effective implementation of the reform is a shared undertaking involving individual staff, teams, the Directorate and the HSC Trust.

This development strategy has been developed to underpin and support the roll-out of the reform programme as a whole and to ensure development of the workforce in order to deliver better outcomes for children. **It should be noted that the development strategy that follows is primarily for staff in the Personal Social Services (PSS) who work within children's services.** It does, however, recommend development for staff in other disciplines and agencies.

This strategy is based on the service and practice implications arising from work undertaken by the Reform Workstreams as highlighted earlier.

As the project progresses the service and practice implications of additional products will need to be extrapolated and assimilated into the Development Strategy particularly in relation to the establishment of **thresholds and standards** of practice and a **Safeguarding Board** for Northern Ireland (SBNI). The SBNI will adopt a project management approach as an interim measure and plans to be operational in shadow form by 1 April 2008. It will be supported by five Safeguarding Panels which will be located within each of the new Trust areas. The SBNI will be independently chaired and will be supported by a range of voluntary, statutory and community groups working together to enhance outcomes for children and young people. It will ultimately be placed on a statutory footing.

Appendix 2 lists the range of indicative service and practice implications based on an analysis of existing products to date. They are not intended to be exhaustive.

2.2 Focus of the Development Strategy

The Development Strategy is aimed specifically at all PSS staff, and their employers, who deliver and manage children's services. Development priorities are recommended for relevant staff in other disciplines, agencies or sectors who work directly with children and families and interface with PSS staff. Other disciplines such as nursing and education may wish to use this strategy as the basis for specifying their own development strategy to support the implementation of the reform programme with their staff.

This Development Strategy has been designed to complement existing key development and training strategies for PSS and the recommendations from the child protection inspections. As such, it should be read in conjunction with:

- *PSS Development and Training Strategy 2006/2016. (DHSSPS, September 2006);*
- *Regional Children Order Training Strategy. (OSS, March 2007);*
- *Training Strategy for the Assessment Framework in Northern Ireland. (UNOCINI) (OSS, June 2007); and*
- *Our Children and Young People – Our shared responsibility: Overview report of inspection of child protection services in Northern Ireland (DHSSPS, December 2006).*

The development priorities set out in this strategy have been aligned with the 6 strategic priorities of the PSS Development and Training Strategy 2006/2016 and are:

1. Leadership and Management;
2. Safety and Accountability;
3. Flexibility and Skills;
4. Motivation and Confidence;
5. Working in Partnership; and
6. Continuous Learning and Development.

In addition, the following document underpins the development priorities:

- *Social Care Governance. A practice workbook. (Northern Ireland Clinical and Social Care Governance Support Team, DHSSPS & SCIE, June 2007).*

2.3 Dissemination

This Development Strategy should be disseminated widely to planners and managers with responsibility for the implementation of workforce development, training and governance activities within the PSS. Implementation will require a whole-system approach and is not the sole responsibility of Trust Social Services Training Departments.

2.4 Timeframe

The Development Strategy will require parallel training and organisational development activity. Over the first 2 years from 2008- 2010, workforce development activity will need to be carefully planned and managed to ensure it supports staff towards the new regime of outcome-focused children's services and prepares them to adapt and implement the required changes in practice.

An implementation period of at least 3 years will be required until 2011 and beyond. It is acknowledged that immediate development and training will need to be timed to support the roll-out of the reforms and, therefore, exact timescales are difficult to prescribe. It is envisaged that the reforms will have become integrated into mainstream service provision by the third and associated workforce development needs will also have become integrated into mainstream activity such as induction, refresher training and continuous professional development. Where appropriate, the timescales for implementation have been aligned with those of the PSS Development and Training Strategy.

2.5 Planning

It will be the responsibility of the HSC Trusts to plan for, detail and secure the resources for the development activity required in accordance with their own systems and procedures. This detail will include the identification of priority groups, exact timing, mode of delivery, content, provider of training etc.

Appendix 2 sets out the range of indicative service and practice implications that may inform the content of any development or training activity. It is recommended that those responsible for planning and delivering workforce development activity should familiarise themselves with the relevant guidance to ensure all relevant development needs are addressed.

It is expected that existing activities within HSC Trusts to support ongoing learning and development of staff, development of best practice and promotion of continuous improvements in service provision may be used to provide the vehicle for delivering the activity arising from this Development Strategy. For example, the *Social Care Governance Practice Workbook* provides a practical framework to support individuals and teams to improve practice and service provision as an integral part of social care governance. There is a strong link between the model of social care governance in the practice workbook and the service and practice implications arising out of the *Guidance on Quality Assurance and Performance Management*. Plans to meet the associated development needs of this guidance could be integrated with the implementation strategy for this practice workbook.

The PSS Development and Training Strategy requires employers to have in place a comprehensive development and training plan by 2008 and personal development plans for all social services staff. It is recommended that the development needs of staff arising from this Development Strategy should be incorporated into these plans.

Plans for the training of PSS staff to support the implementation of the reforms should be an integral part of the HSC Trust's annual training plans and linked to the rollout of the reforms.

Those responsible for planning and managing development activity to support the reform programme will need to work closely with operational staff responsible for the co-ordination of the implementation of the reforms in their Trust as well as with the reform programme and other disciplines and agencies.

2.6 Partnership

The reform programme recognises and promotes the need for effective partnership working across all programmes of care, agencies and disciplines that work with children and families. Where appropriate, development and training provision should promote best practice in working together. It will be for each programme of care, discipline and agency to plan for, detail and secure the resources for its own development activity in accordance with their own systems and procedures. The Development Strategy recommends, rather than specifies, development activity for other disciplines and agencies.

The HSC Trusts should ensure the participation in relevant training of the voluntary and community sector staff involved in the provision of services for children in need and their families.

2.7 Implementation, Co-ordination and Regional consistency

Arrangements for the co-ordination and implementation of development activity linked to the implementation of the reforms are the responsibility of each HSC Trust. Arrangements are in place through the RIT structures to ensure regional consistency in both the rollout of the reforms and associated development activity. Those responsible for planning and/or delivering development activity within Trusts will need to liaise with relevant RIT contacts locally and regionally to ensure activity complies with and is consistent with any agreed regional approach.

2.8 Monitoring

Management systems should support the monitoring of outcomes and improvements in practice of all development activity related to the reform programme.

3. Development Priorities

3.1 Development Priority 1: Leadership and Management

3.1.1 Rationale

The successful implementation of the reform programme will require the effective strategic leadership and professional management of children's services.

3.1.2 Supporting Statements

Planners, managers and specialist staff will require the skills and competence to lead and support others, including frontline practitioners, in implementing the reforms.

Managers must have the capacity to provide professional leadership, management and supervision for staff, with a focus on safe and effective performance and good outcomes for children and young people.

First line managers are the leaders and custodians of safe and effective practice at the front line. This requires high level skills in supervising staff and in making professional judgements in complex situations.

3.1.3 Leadership and Management Development Priorities for the PSS

The leadership and management key priority areas for the PSS are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. The development needs of senior and operational managers responsible for implementing the reforms in children's services should be an **integral part of the organisation's overall plan for leadership and management development** in line with the policy statements, strategic targets and actions set out in the PSS Development and Training Strategy. The implementation of this plan for leaders and managers in children's services should reflect the individual's need for development to support the reforms, the organisation's need to ensure the effective roll-out of the reforms and the need for professional leadership in children's services.
- b. **All managers and principal and senior practitioners** in children's services must be supported to understand and implement effectively **audit and social care governance** arrangements reflecting the **Guidance on Quality Assurance and Performance Management**.
- c. All social work **team leaders and line managers** in children's services will undertake training in **supervision and performance appraisal** as soon as is practicable but **within 2 years of appointment to post**. Such training should reflect the Supervision Policy, Standards, and Criteria.
- d. All social work **team leaders and line managers** in children's services should receive **training** in supervision and performance appraisal in line with the Guidance **by 2010**.

- e. All **managers** in children's services should be supported to understand and implement effectively the **Guidance on Caseload Management**.
- f. All **managers** in children's services should be supported to understand and implement effectively the **Administrative Systems, Recording Policy, Standards, and Criteria**.
- g. All **managers** in children's services should be supported to acquire the knowledge and understanding to **enable staff to make optimum use of available technology** for managing case information, staff-related information and other administrative details. Such support should reflect any centralised management information system that may be introduced across children's services.

3.1.4 Development recommended for social workers in other agencies and for other disciplines

Training in supervision and performance appraisal is **recommended** for all:

- a. social work qualified line managers in **other agencies** responsible for supporting social work practitioners in implementing the reforms (e.g. UNOCINI); and
- b. managers in **other disciplines** responsible for the supervision of staff involved in child protection work.

3.2 Development Priority 2: Safety and Accountability

3.2.1 Rationale

In order to ensure safe and accountable practice, development and training provision in support of the roll-out of the reform implementation programme should be based on recognised standards and comply with policy, legislation, service procedures.

3.2.2 Supporting Statements

It is recognised that appropriate development, training and qualifications can support staff in delivering safely, effectively and consistently on the complex range of functions within children's services.

Development and training provision for staff working with children and young people need to be relevant, be of an appropriate standard and be informed by the range of guidance documents produced by the Reform Implementation Team and issued by the DHSSPS.

All staff should have access to, and be expected to integrate into practice, all DHSSPS-endorsed Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) good practice guidelines as well as messages from inspections. Staff should also make use of valid and reliable research to inform practice decisions.

3.2.3 Safety and Accountability Development Priorities for the PSS

The safety and accountability key priority areas for the PSS are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. **Development and training provision** for staff within children's services should be based on **recognised professional and/or service standards**, comply with **policy, legislation, service procedures**, be informed by **valid and reliable research and with the range of guidance documents** produced by the Reform Implementation Team.
- b. **Development and training provision** should reflect the **messages and recommendations** from **formal inspections and reviews** and the **learning** from **case management reviews** and **serious adverse incidents**.
- c. All **PSS staff** in children's services must receive **induction** training, linked to the NISCC endorsed standards and appropriate to post, **within 6 months of appointment to post**.
- d. All **PSS staff** in children's services should be supported to understand and implement effective **social care governance** arrangements reflecting the **Guidance on Quality Assurance and Performance Management** and the **social care governance practice workbook**.
- e. All **staff** in children's services, including administrative staff, should receive appropriate development and support to understand and implement effectively the administrative systems and recording arrangements that reflect the **Administrative Systems, Recording Policy, Standards, and Criteria**.
- f. All **staff** in children's services, including administrative staff, should receive appropriate **training in information technology** to support electronic systems that may be established within children's services.

3.2.4 Development recommended for social workers in other agencies and for other disciplines

Development and support to understand and implement effectively the administrative systems and recording arrangements that reflect the **Administrative Systems, Recording Policy, Standards, and Criteria** are **recommended** for all:

- a. relevant staff in **other agencies** who work directly with children and families;
and
- b. staff in **other disciplines** who work directly with children and families.

3.2.5 Development recommended for the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Following the establishment of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, **induction training is recommended** for the Chair and members. It will be for the relevant Workstream to determine the induction that is required.

3.3 Development Priority 3: Flexibility and Skills

3.3.1 Rationale

Service development plans should factor in the workforce requirements for the successful implementation of the reform programme. Such plans will need to take account of generic and specialist competence and the lead-in time needed to have these in place in the workforce.

3.3.2 Supporting Statements

Employers will want to ensure that frontline staff in children's services are supported to acquire the core body of generic knowledge, skills and qualifications related to job function. In addition, they will want to ensure that identified staff are supported to develop specialist expertise associated with relevant qualifications linked to job function and level of responsibility.

It is essential that staff have access to appropriate and timely development and training provision to help them understand, adapt to and implement the changes and improvements in practice and service provision envisaged by the reform programme.

3.3.3 Flexibility and Skills Development Priorities

The flexibility and skills key development priority areas for the PSS are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. The PSS Development and Training Strategy requires that by 2008 there should be a comprehensive development and training plan for the social services workforce. This should take account of the **common roles and grades** of staff in child protection services established through the reform programme. While staff recruited to these posts will require induction training, the development and training plan should reflect the **generic and specialist components of agreed job descriptions**. Additional roles and grades that may be agreed through the reform programme will also need to be included in the development and training plan.
- b. Each development and training plan should also take account of the **workforce development requirements for all PSS staff** in children's services arising from any **guidance documents** produced by the Reform Implementation Team.
- c. All development and training that is provided should be in line with this Strategy, the PSS Development and Training Strategy 2006 – 2016, the revised **Regional Children Order Training Strategy (March 2007)** and with the **Training Strategy for the Assessment Framework in Northern Ireland (June 2007)**.

- d. **By 2009**, information should be available on where new training arising from the reform programme sits within the PQ Framework. Where appropriate, this training will be integrated into existing PQ accredited programmes and an action plan and timescales for the development of new learning and training initiatives in line with identified workforce needs will be in place.

3.3.4 Development recommended for social workers in other agencies and for other disciplines

It is **recommended** that the workforce development requirements arising from any **guidance documents** produced by the Reform Implementation Team are **identified and provided** for all:

- a. relevant staff in **other agencies** who work directly with children and families; and
- b. staff in **other disciplines** who work directly with children and families.

3.4 Development Priority 4: Motivation and Confidence

3.4.1 Rationale

Employers will want to recruit and retain motivated and confident staff in children's services in order to secure a suitably trained and competent workforce that will meet the challenge of changing service needs and produce better outcomes for children and families.

3.4.2 Supporting Statements

As new roles and grades in children's services are developed and implemented, and are linked to competence frameworks and qualifications, staff must be supported in having planned access to appropriate development and training opportunities.

The introduction of new roles and grades which are integral to the reform programme will facilitate employers to promote more clearly delineated career structures for staff in children's services and help to attract and retain the best staff.

Access to appropriate training and development opportunities will assist in motivating and retaining staff in practice.

3.4.3 Motivation and Confidence Development Priorities

The motivation and confidence key priority areas for PSS development are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. Employers will ensure that the training needs of all and any subsequent **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, arising from the guidance documents produced by the Reform Implementation Team and issued by the DHSSPS, are identified **by 2008** and incorporated into both the comprehensive development and training plan for the social services workforce and personal development plans.

- b. All **Principal Practitioners** selected through the April 2007 recruitment process must undertake **regionally agreed induction training** within **6 months** of appointment to post.
- c. All **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, should have **access to appropriate development and training opportunities** to meet their identified needs and any registration requirements with the NISCC.
- d. Employers will ensure that all **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, have a **personal development and training plan**, linked to service needs and individual career aspirations and in line with Care Standards, KSF requirements, approaches to service user and public involvement and NISCC post registration training and learning requirements **by 2010**.
- e. All **registered social work staff** in children's services should be encouraged and supported to **achieve PQ credits** based on their ongoing development.

3.5 Development Priority 5: Working in Partnership

3.5.1 Rationale

In order to improve outcomes for children and families, existing arrangements for working with other disciplines, agencies and sectors need to be sustained and new ones developed. Arrangements for working together need to reflect integrated and holistic responses to those in need or at risk and therefore need to include the service user, carers, social services and other related providers, as well as education and training providers. Education and training curricula at qualifying and post qualifying levels should be informed by and support the recommendations from the child protection inspections.

3.5.2 Supporting Statements

The modernisation of children's services is designed to improve the quality of services and thereby promote better outcomes for children and young people. This means children and young people need to be respected and listened to by all those who make plans and decisions that impact on their lives.

Working in partnership with children, young people and their families has been and will remain a central tenet of children's services. The active participation of children and families requires the sustained support of staff and the successful implementation of the reform programme will require further development of flexible, responsive and person-centred ways of working with children and families.

The reform programme recognises and promotes the need for effective working across all programmes of care within HSC Trusts and agencies that work with children and families or provide adult services where children are part of the family structure and/or household.

The implementation of a common assessment framework (UNOCINI) provides the vehicle to ensure that the needs of children are identified and that there is a single assessment process in place across all HSC Trusts and other agencies in Northern Ireland that facilitates partnership working and shared responsibility between all those who are engaged with children and families.

3.5.3 Working in Partnership Development Priorities

The key priority areas for working in partnership for the PSS development are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. All **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, should receive **training in UNOCINI** as prescribed in the **Training Strategy for the Assessment Framework in Northern Ireland (June 2007)**.
- b. All **PSS staff** in mental health, learning disability and addiction services should receive appropriate child protection training, including training on UNOCINI, and PSS staff in child care should receive appropriate training in mental health, learning disability, alcohol and drug abuse and the impact on children.
- c. Where required, **social services should plan and promote**, in co-operation with other disciplines and agencies, such training as is necessary to **support working together** in the effective delivery of statutory functions.
- d. **Providers of professional social work education and training in Northern Ireland** should ensure that the **teaching of assessment practice** is based on and supports **UNOCINI** at **qualifying and post qualifying levels**.
- e. **The Information Sharing Policy, Standards and Criteria** should be **integrated into all development and training provision**.

3.5.4 Development recommended for social workers in other agencies and for other disciplines

- a. It is recommended that **training in UNOCINI** as prescribed in the **Training Strategy for the Assessment Framework in Northern Ireland (June 2007)** is **provided** for all:
 - (i) relevant staff in **other agencies** who work directly with children and families; and
 - (ii) staff in **other disciplines** who work directly with children and families.
- b. It is recommended that providers of **professional training** in Northern Ireland for other disciplines (e.g. nursing, allied health professions, PSNI) ensure that the **teaching of assessment of children's needs** is based on and supports **UNOCINI** at **qualifying and post qualifying levels**.
- c. It is recommended that, where possible, **other disciplines** plan and promote **partnership work** with social services and each other.

3.6 Development Priority 6: Continuous Learning and Development

3.6.1 Rationale

To ensure the successful modernisation of children's services, employers will need to support staff to maintain and develop their competence in order to undertake new roles and responsibilities and continuously improve their practice. Employers are responsible for supporting staff to make use of continuous learning opportunities linked to the duty of quality, risk management and governance arrangements.

3.6.2 Supporting statements

Updating knowledge and information in order to inform service and practice improvements is the responsibility of the organisation and its staff.

The workplace should be developed as a field of learning.

Employers should ensure that policies, procedures and resources including appropriately trained staff are in place to support continuous learning, development and assessment of competence in the workplace.

Continuous learning opportunities should be integrated with existing qualification frameworks as appropriate.

All the NISCC registrants have a personal responsibility to maintain and develop their competence throughout their career and to contribute to the learning and development of others.

3.6.3 Continuous Learning and Development Priorities

The continuous learning and development key priority areas for the PSS are identified below. They do not preclude additions as appropriate.

- a. All **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, should be supported to reflect on and learn from their own and others' experiences to improve their practice.
- b. All **PSS staff** in children's services, including managers, should be supported to reflect on and learn from good practice guidelines produced by SCIE that have been endorsed by the DHSSPS, the range of **guidance documents** produced by the Reform Implementation Team, valid and reliable research and messages from inspections in order to improve outcomes for children and families.
- c. **Management systems** and **training design** in children's services should support the application and integration of learning into practice.
- d. **Management systems** should support the **monitoring** of outcomes and improvements in practice of all **development activity** related to the reform programme.

- e. All **managers** and **principal and senior practitioners** in children's services should ensure that there are communication processes in place to **share learning, spread innovative practice and celebrate good practice** at both team and organisational levels.

4. Securing Training Provision for Personal Social Services Staff

4.1 Introduction

Where training activity for staff in social services is the agreed means of achieving workforce development to support the implementation of the reform programme, the resources required to support this training should be incorporated into existing annual training planning and commissioning arrangements for PSS training. Social Services training providers and commissioners will need to prioritise training needs in line with the organisation's priorities and capacity to both deliver the training and to release relevant staff to attend training, while at the same time continuing to deliver safe services.

Current arrangements for commissioning through the 4 Boards to the 5 Trusts remain extant until any new arrangements are announced by the DHSSPS.

4.2 Commissioning arrangements

4.2.1 Personal Social Services

The modernisation of child protection services and taking forward the recommendations from the Overview Report of the Child Protection Inspections are the two key priority areas for the DHSSPS in respect of its commitment to improve the safety and quality of child protection services. Plans and costs for training to support these priorities should therefore be an integral part of each HSC Trust's annual Children Order training plans. Plans for training for PSS staff to support the implementation of the reform programme and associated workforce development should be an integral part of each HSC Trust's annual Children Order training plans.

Trust training plans should identify:

- Priority training needs and associated learning outcomes to be met;
- Priority staff in PSS for training activity, including required volume;
- Priority staff from other disciplines and agencies, including required volume, to be included in PSS training and in line with Regional Children Order Training Strategy;
- Mode and duration of delivery;
- Relevant standards underpinning training provision; and
- Costing.

Trusts should support regional co-operation where it is appropriate and more economical or efficient to do so. For example, securing scarce specialist expertise, catering for small numbers or opportunities to promote regional consistency, share learning or avoid duplication of effort.

Training plans and associated costs should be submitted to the commissioning bodies by Trusts for consideration. Commissioners should review Trust training plans and costs and agree any adjustments with Trusts before submitting a bid for funding to the DHSSPS. Commissioning decisions should take into consideration:

- The assessed needs of children and their families in the Trust area;
- The policy priorities of the DHSSPS;
- The need for and opportunities for regional co-operation;
- Commissioning priorities;
- An assessment of the capacity of Trusts to deliver planned training and the capacity of the organisation to release staff to undertake planned training;
- The Regional Children Order Training Strategy; and
- Any budgetary constraints.

Trusts will account to the Commissioner for the management of PSS training resources to support agreed training plans and priorities in line with this strategy and will also report on the quality and outcomes of the training activity in supporting the roll-out of the reform programme.

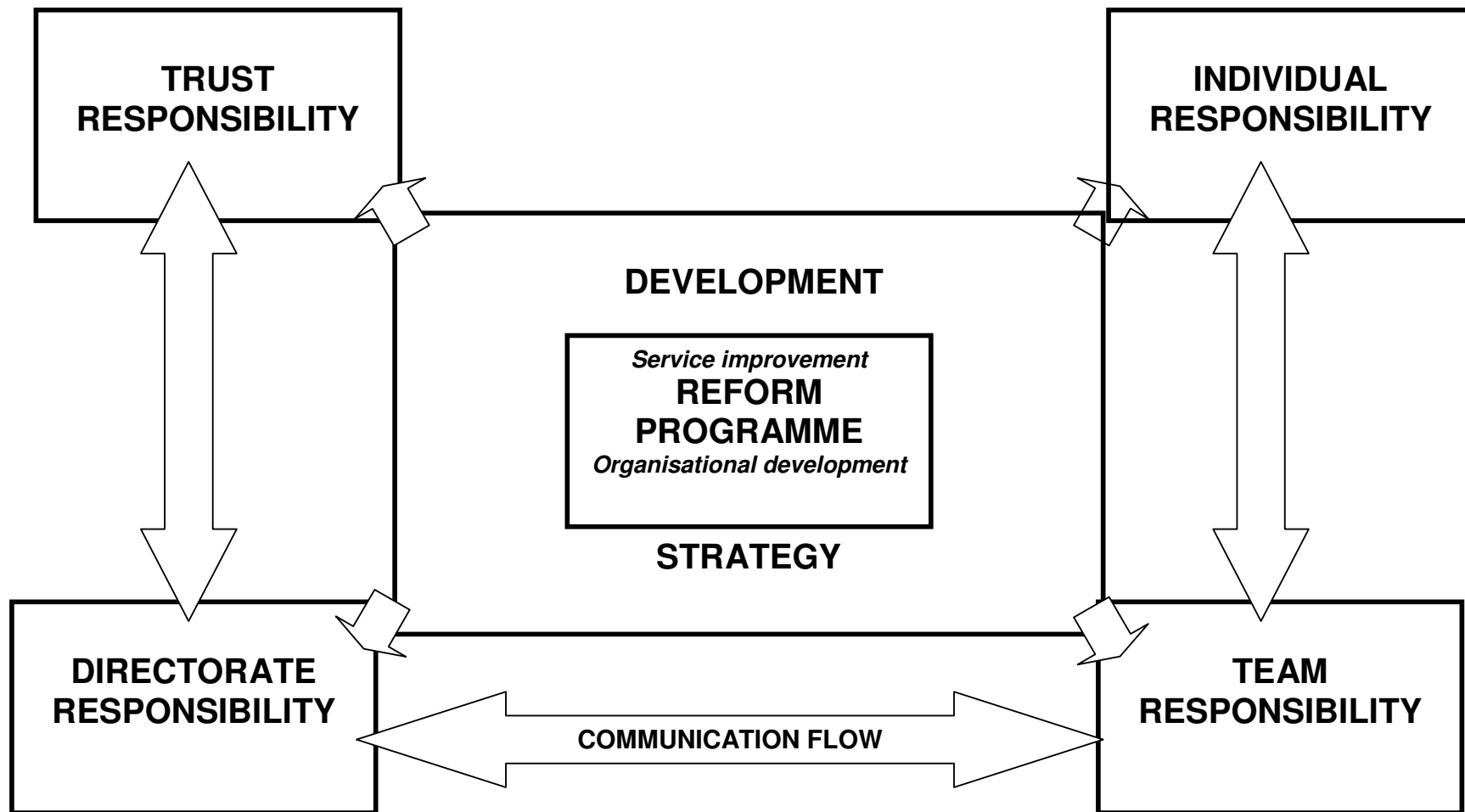
The commissioning body is responsible for monitoring training delivery against the strategy, targets, quality standards and budget allocations and will, in turn, report to the Office of Social Services on activity, spend and impact of training on the implementation of the reform programme.

4.2.2 Other disciplines and agencies

While the PSS may commission multidisciplinary/ interagency training in line with the Regional Children Order Training Strategy, i.e. Level 1: Awareness Training and Level 2: Partnership Working, other disciplines, agencies and sectors are responsible for commissioning and providing recommended training for their own staff in line with their own organisations, commissioning arrangements.

Where joint training is indicated or appropriate, the resource contribution of all respective parties to the delivery of training should be made explicit in training plans. It is the responsibility of training commissioners and providers to negotiate and agree their respective resource contribution to joint training.

5. Appendix 1 - Centrality of Workforce Development



6. Appendix 2 - Indicative Service and Practice Implications of Workstream Products

(i)	Access to learning which focuses on impact on practice of: Inspection Reports, Case Management Reviews, Enquiries and research
(ii)	Aims and objectives of Children's Pathway Service and links with key priorities/targets (e.g. OFMDFM outcomes, Child Protection Inspection, Reform Programme)
(iii)	Assessing and managing risk
(iv)	Chairing and managing case conferences and reviews
(v)	Change management
(vi)	Child protection training for staff in other appropriate services e.g. mental health, learning disability and addiction services
(vii)	Communications and media management
(viii)	Critical understanding and use of single agency specialist assessment tools and models
(ix)	Critical use of specialist multi disciplinary/multi agency assessment tools and models
(x)	Decision-making and evidence-based practice -using and analysing information to inform decisions including primary sources (child, family, other disciplines/agencies) and secondary sources including research, SCIE products etc.
(xi)	Developing skills in undertaking audits
(xii)	Developing skills in joint working, including development of confidence and competence of personnel to challenge and resolve differences with other professions/agencies
(xiii)	Development of skills in analysis and care planning and developing pathway assessments for children
(xiv)	Effective supervision (i) - Newly appointed Team Leaders
(xv)	Effective supervision (ii)- Experienced Team Leaders
(xvi)	Emergency planning and management
(xvii)	IT training
(xviii)	Joint Protocol Training
(xix)	Methods and approaches to service user and public involvement
(xx)	Outcome focussed practice - improving outcomes for child and young people in need or at risk
(xxi)	Partnership working
(xxii)	Performance appraisal
(xxiii)	Prevention and promotion of empowerment and self management e.g. Family Group Conferencing, Restorative Justice etc
(xxiv)	Project management
(xxv)	Recording and Report Writing skills
(xxvi)	Service improvement techniques
(xxvii)	Understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to the administration and storage of files
(xxviii)	Specialist training - TCI, therapeutic interventions etc

(xxix)	The accountable practitioner - exercising authority as a Corporate Parent, child protection and Human Rights, applying thresholds and good practice standards, professional accountability as a registered worker, social care governance, getting what you need from supervision, improving practice through reflection and continuous professional development, sharing learning and enabling others
(xxx)	The Child's perspective - developing child-centred practice, including training on children's rights and effective participation strategies
(xxxii)	UNOCINI
(xxxiii)	Understanding of statutory responsibilities, authority and lines of accountability
(xxxiv)	Understanding of own and others roles and responsibilities (within team, with other teams, disciplines and agencies)
(xxxv)	Understanding of child protection systems, structures, policies and procedures
(xxxvi)	Understanding of thresholds and standards
(xxxvii)	Understanding the importance of multi-agency working and the respective roles and responsibilities of other agencies and disciplines within the context of local and regional safeguarding arrangements, including an understanding of the authority and powers of PSNI and Social Services in respect of children and young people
(xxxviii)	Understanding the importance of inter-agency information sharing and knowledge of legislation, case law and local and regional procedures that guide decision-making about the sharing of information, with particular reference to child protection
(xxxviii)	Workforce planning and development

Equality

This policy/proposal has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and it was found that there were no negative impacts on any grouping.

Human Rights

This policy has been considered under the terms of the Humans Rights Act 1998 and was deemed compatible with the European Convention Rights contained within the Act.