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Certificate of Credit in Care Purchasing and Brokerage

Module 2

welcome

Modules 1-4 will cover

- Context for children's care placements
- Commissioning – what is it and your role
- Managing referrals ✓
- Purchasing and Procurement ✓
- Negotiation skills
- Contract management
- Contract monitoring – using data
- Transitioning arrangements

Assessment Task

You have one assessment task, which is linked to your job role and so can be tailored to meet your needs and those of your employing agency.

You will be asked to write a **reflective commentary that describes a care placement / placements you have made, how you managed the process and what new practice you implemented.** You should show how you applied the best practice you learnt on the course and what the challenges and barriers were. We suggest that you use the following headings to structure your commentary:

- Introduction
- Managing the referral
- Procuring the placement
- Contract management and monitoring
- Personal learning

Between 1,800 – 2,200 words

Assessment support

- Online group briefing - covering assessment criteria, resources, Moodle (University's virtual learning environment).
- Two individual 'virtual' tutorials with an academic advisor to help you select an appropriate care placement to use and plan the assessment and the second to review and discuss your 'first draft'.
- Your work will be assessed as passed / not passed and you will receive detailed and constructive feedback based on the assessment criteria.

Timeline

- Enrol with Oxford Brookes University
- Attend online group briefing:
- 1st tutorial with academic advisor:
- Email draft assessment to advisor a few days before 2nd tutorial
- Second tutorial with advisor:
- Submit assessment on Moodle:
- Receive notification of result: **3 weeks later**

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Needs, Outcomes and Referrals

Context

- Understanding and assessment of individual needs – what does good practice look like?
- Who is responsible?
- What is the role of a children's placement team?
- How does this connect with national policy?



Institute of Public Care Commissioning Cycle



Outcomes for people

“Public service commissioners are under increasing pressure to demonstrate the impact of their services on the beneficiary in terms of the outcomes achieved. To do this, they will need to focus on the impact on the service user and what has been achieved, rather than just how time and money have been spent”

Social Finance (2015:2) Commissioning for outcomes across children's services and health and social care



Things people like about an outcome-based approach

- Based on what matters to people
- Holistic approach
- Fits with person centred approaches; puts the individual at the centre
- Empowers service users and promotes self advocacy
- Emphasises evidence based practice
- Focuses on needs and seeks positive interventions to provide better outcomes
- It facilitates a co-productive approach using person's assets as well as services or support

IPC report

What is wrong with referrals?

- Poor quality
- Deficit focused
- More detail needed including 'soft information'
- Simpler process
- Excessive requirements for tendering

Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) report

- Again described as ‘the weakest area of commissioning’.
- Referrals often do not provide accurate information about a child or give clarity about what is expected from a placement.
- A need to improve the way children are included. Their ‘buy in’ makes for better matching and transition.
- No matter how good strategic arrangements are, if referrals are poor, this places the whole framework at risk.
- Problem of poor referrals is being better recognised by commissioners. A need to influence social work practice & see foster carers and residential workers as the experts to inform these documents.

Provider comments

“I deal with hundreds of referrals every week”

“Authorities get labelled as consistently providing poor referrals”

“Local Authorities take so long to get back to me with requests for information that the placement has normally gone to someone who filled in the referral well in the first place”

“Its so obvious when a old referral has just had a bit of information added to it”

Exercise in small groups

- What does a good referral look like?
- What is the key matching information?
- What are the common mistakes made?
- What about risks?

Making referrals look great

- Lots of positive information helps providers picture how a child could fit into their home.
- Detail how carers can make supportive connections with the child.
- Provide sufficient, **UP TO DATE** information on the child's needs. Out of date info results in low/no offers.
- Always provide context on behaviours – what triggers them and what is in place to manage/mitigate them.
- Try to include the voice of the child. Maybe you could use “I Statements”.
- Try to be balanced – not all positive and not all negative.
- Always start on a positive to get the providers interested.
- Provide information from previous placements – why did they end? What did and did not work well?

Importance of language

Labels & Context – what do these phrases mean in the absence of context?

Has issues
with
substance
or alcohol

They
frequently
abscond

History of
assaulting
carers

Doesn't
respond
well to
boundaries

Has
problems
at school

Gets
upset very
easily

Use of
physical
restraint
has been
required

History of
fire
starting

Articulating risk and the importance of context

Providing context of risk is essential, to help providers decide if they can make an offer. Where a child has a history of challenging behaviour, we must be open and honest about this. Build context in the following way:

- Give as much detail around an incident as possible.
- Describe how the child can be supported.
- Describe how risk can be reduced and managed.
- Share what triggers have been identified and what are the contributing factors.
- State if certain environments reduce or heighten the behaviour.
- Try to be balanced – not all positive and not all negative.
- What does the child say about their behaviour and how they feel they can be best supported?
- Has the risk reduced over time?

Capturing the voice of the child



It isn't always easy to get a child's view but it has never been more important for providers to hear them so we must strive to include a child's voice where we can.

- Consider if writing in the first person may be more effective (I Statements).
- Include their wishes for the new home. Are there things about a new home and carers that they look forward to?
- What are their overall wants and needs from a new home?
- What do they like? Books, films, hobbies, school subjects etc.
- What do they dislike?
- What are their worries about going to a new home?
- How would they like to be introduced to new carers and other children?
- Are they comfortable talking about their own story?

Outcomes approach

Local authorities will all have different models of practice and so it will differ how we articulate outcomes for children. Think about what approach your local authority has in place and what are they trying to achieve.

What should this approach look like:

- Outcomes need to include both short and long-term goals for the child.
- They need to be clear about the role we expect the home/carer to play in working towards these goals.
- Who is setting these goals? Is the voice of the child being included? After all it is their future.
- They need to be structured so that they can be used to guide providers in regular progress reports and framed around stability.

Outcomes approach

Below are examples of how we could describe outcomes using 'I Statements' from the child's perspective or a more formal outcome approach including specific measures:

'I Statement': I want to feel safe and supported. My carers will help me to make the right choices about my behaviour and help me with my schoolwork if I am struggling.

Formal outcome: For X to be supported by a caring adult, both in terms of behaviours and all aspects of their schooling, with a view to them achieving at least 80% attendance at school.

Flexibility for matching (1)

Try to avoid overly strict criteria around placement requirements as this will limit the number of considerations and offers you get. For example:

- **Location:** Could the placement be within a certain traveling distance of a school instead of within a set boundary.
- **Education:** as a last resort, could the school be changed for the right home?
- **Single carers:** is it reasonable that one carer could look after the child?

Flexibility for matching (2)

- **Solo placements:** these placements are scarce so could the child be placed with only younger or only older children and a specific gender to meet need.
- **More info:** always be prepared to answer more questions from a potential provider and don't delay, as this request could mean there may be a match.
- **Balancing the ideal and the reality:** it works better to be upfront and balanced than it does to have to reissue a referral with flexibility later down the line.

Who do I talk to?

I'm on Duty, I don't know the young person or I've just been assigned the case.

- Educational case worker
- Teacher / School Pastoral Worker
- IRO
- Previous agency
- Previous carer
- Family

it's

o'clock

Luke Rodgers



Referrals continued...

- Reflections from the Luke Rogers video
- Immediate thoughts on what you might take back to your teams to improve practice.

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Procurement and Purchasing

Introduction to procurement



Procurement is...

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, works or services from (usually) external providers/suppliers and managing these through to the end of contract.

Procurement or purchasing usually refers to the process of finding and deciding on a provider and buying a service.

Involves the selection, negotiation and agreement with the provider of what service is to be supplied.

The legal procurement framework



Procurement approaches

How services are procured can have a big impact:

Competitive Procedures (most common)

- Open tendering
- Restricted tendering

Frameworks

- Dynamic Framework Systems
- Restricted Frameworks

Other options (to be used with caution)

- Spot purchasing
- Direct award

Each impacts differently upon providers

What are purchasing and procurement arrangements for individual care purchasing?

- Currently spot purchasing is the predominant model in the existing children's services marketplace.
- Sometimes this is achieved through an arrangement that meets public contract regulations eg a framework or Dynamic Purchasing System and has pre-agreed price structures and contract terms.
- However, in more recent years purchasing often takes place outside of these arrangements in the open market and price and terms and conditions are negotiated individually.
- Alternative partnership arrangements might include: volume discounts, preferred provider lists, block contracts ('hard' and 'soft'), use of social impact bonds, personal health budgets.

Award stage

- Evaluate tenders on an equal footing, based on criteria and relative weighting that was stated in advance.
- The award of contracts is based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT), looking at the best price-quality ratio.
- Can use full life cycle costing.
- Prioritise key local concerns and be innovative about information requested from providers and/or the evidence used.
- Feedback is given to unsuccessful tenderers.
- Take advice if post tender negotiation needed.

Provider Selection Regime (01/01/24)

The Provider Selection Regime aims to replace the existing procurement rules for healthcare services. The aim of the Provider Selection Regime is to make it easier to integrate services and enhance collaboration, and to remove the rigidity associated with the current procurement rules, and the related bureaucracy and cost.

For:

- NHS and Public Health Services
- ICBS
- LAs who arrange healthcare services as part of Public Health or Section 75 arrangements

Activity

- In small groups discuss the different arrangements in place in your LA for children's placements? eg regional / sub regional frameworks, DPVs.
- Identify what works well / what is more problematic and be ready to feedback 3 key points to the whole group.

‘Homework’

Think of an example to share of where you have negotiated a placement:

- What was it for?
- Were you selling for a high price or asking for a lower price?
- What happened?
- What skills did you use?
- What was the outcome?

Read: Top Ten Attributes, Top Ten Pitfalls of contract management

Your reflections on today



Contact Us



<https://ipc.brookes.ac.uk>



ipc_courses@brookes.ac.uk



https://twitter.com/ipc_brookes



01865 790312



[linkedin.com/company/institute-of-public-care-brookes](https://www.linkedin.com/company/institute-of-public-care-brookes)