**Progressing Disability Services Social Workers in Disabilities**

**Special Interest Group (PDS SWiD SIG)**

**Venue/ Platform: Online, 3pm to 4:30pm Date: 24/09/2024**

**Chair:** Eibhlín Fleming ([fleminge@cope-foundation.ie](mailto:fleminge@cope-foundation.ie) )

**Co-ordinators:** Colman Parker ([Colman.Parker@stewartscare.ie](mailto:Colman.Parker@stewartscare.ie) ), Eibhlín Fleming

**Minutes:** Emmet Corrigan ([emmet.corrigan@hse.ie](mailto:emmet.corrigan@hse.ie) )

**Attendance:** 12 in attendance.

**Representation noted from:** Geographical representation from: Kildare x 4, Laois/ Offaly x 2, Wexford x 1, Dublin x 1, Cork x 3, CHO5x 1.

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| **Discussion** | **Outcome** |
| **Welcomes,**  **Review minutes from most recent PDS SWiD meeting 28/05/2024**  **&**  **Agenda set out for today.** | Eibhlín welcomed all to meeting.  Minutes check in from 28/05/2024 - See previous minutes.  **Today’s agenda** set out taking on board previous meeting minutes and outstanding actions:   1. **Welcome to Caroline Strong who has commenced in role of Chief Operating Officer with the Irish Association of Social Workers.** 2. **The PDS Roadmap** 3. **Respite update** 4. **Information Management System (IMS)**   **AOB Agenda topics:**   1. **Representative from PDS Social Work for upcoming Oireachtas meeting** 2. **Ideas for IASW office for CPD in 2025** 3. **Regional meetings/ Circle of Support to Social Work** 4. **A National picture of representation…**   **Presentation:**   1. **Apprenticeship Programme as commencing through UCC.** |
| **1.**  **Welcome to our Chief Operating Officer** | Eibhlín welcomed and introduced Caroline Strong to the SiG of PDS in Disabilities.  Caroline introduced herself and advised that she is in attendance at today’s SiG to more so as an observer. Towards end of meeting in the context of representation of Social Workers views, a copy of “*Survey of Social Workers’ Experience of Supervision and Management in Children’s Disability Network Teams July 2023*” was shared with Caroline.  Caroline is available to Social Workers through the main IASW office. We wish Caroline all the best in this role. |
| **2.**  **The PDS Roadmap** | * We acknowledged that there are many strands to the HSE PDS Roadmap eg Forsa representation and input through the 5 pillars, Disability Advisory Groups (DAGS), National Federation of Social Workers resources, etc… * We acknowledged that this will be a continuous agenda topic and highly relevant to ensure Social Work input. * Since a National Forsa meeting in Nerney’s Court on 26/02/2024 which took in FORSA HSE representatives from across disciplines, there has been the establishment of 5 working group/ pillars within the roadmap to ensure input from the ground up. Eg. To date, where there was a proposed movement for CDNTs meeting with families on waiting lists and through Union liaising with the HSE, such has been halted due to concerns expressed regarding this practice.   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………  Catherine gave feedback to meeting:   * Clinical rep predominantly through Forsa – Catherine on waitlist prioritisation group * A lot of groups/ pillars still not activated eg Communication and Education groups. * Colman gave feedback that it seems that Children’s disabilities are missing from DAG – that this rep seems to be from adult disabilities? Seeking out reps – Clinical programme for people with Disabilities. Andrea advised that somebody from Wexford may be a rep on this – clarity to be sought.   Agreed Actions/ Outcome:   * Any updates received by SIG members to be shared at next meeting. * Just to add clarity, 5 pillar titles/ Working group titles (can be corrected if wrongly named by minute taker!):   ***Working Group 1:*** *National Integrated Services for AON, NAP & Joint Protocol.*  ***Working Group 2:*** *Service Access & Improvement*  ***Working Group 3:*** *Workforce*  ***Working Group 4:*** *Communication & Engagement*  ***Working Group 5:*** *Engagement with Education & Support for Special Schools* |
| **3.**  **Respite Update** | * An ongoing topic/ issue of concern for this SiG. * Catherine and Colman gave feedback that they made a submission to minister Rabbitte last year – updated new members of team. Highlighting inequity of respite pathways, residential pathways.   Agreed actions/ Outcome:   * Respite subgroup are awaiting a new date for a meeting again with Minister Rabbitte. |
| **4.**  **Information Management System**  **(IMS)** | * The topic of IMS is to be maintained on agenda - querying the experience of group members using IMS. * Very few of meeting SIG attendees in May 2024 utilised IMS and for carry forward as agenda topic.   Agreed Actions/ Outcome:   * To be returned to PDS SWiD agenda for next meeting in November 2024 – and invite to be put to Gretta who volunteered to be share IMS feedback in May’s meeting   eg (from May 2024)*”If any members wish to give direct input/ feedback on use of IMS in their practice, they can do so to* [*gkeane@stGabriels.ie*](mailto:gkeane@stGabriels.ie)*” (“as Gretta’s manager is on IMS oversight group…”* |
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| **5.**  **Representative from PDS Social Work for upcoming Oireachtas meeting** | Email from Danielle McGoldrick IASW manager with letter dated 29/07/2024 read out by Eibhlin containing joint professionals bodies perspective eg SLTs, OTs, Dieticians, Physiotherapists, Psychologists and Social Work.   * See letter shared and Cathaoirleach Patrick Costello wishes to invite representatives from PDS Social work – Oireachtas meeting which will be at short notice. * The PDS SWiD document; “*Survey of Social Workers’ Experience of Supervision and Management in Children’s Disability Network Teams July 2023*” was noted as a good reference point to highlighting Social Work experiences on the ground at present.   Agreed Actions/ Outcome:  Liam is willing to be a volunteer in this regard to represent Social Work view. Liam’s experience and knowledge of current Social Work in PDS issues from his engagement at DAG level, Forsa level and on the ground practice make’s Liam a great fit for this role. Thanks Liam. |
| **6.**  **Ideas for IASW office for CPD in 2025** | Eibhlin advised meeting that ideas being sought out from IASW office for CPD in 2025  Agreed Actions / Outcome:   * Best practices – learning from experience to date eg showcasing best practices eg Sibshops, etc… to roll out/ develop. * Transition to adult services – “sometimes about what’s available is not always best or most fitting outcome for children/ young person in children’s disability services.” * Best practice considerations – parental supporting journey – A module on this could be developed. * Parent’s experiences and indeed parents with ID themselves to be noted/ acknowledged. |
| **7.**  **Regional meetings/ Circle of Support to Social Work** | Eibhlín enquired about Regional support meetings? What is the picture nationally? In the context that perhaps the smaller numbers in attendance at today’s meeting may indicate good local support arrangements.  Eibhlin shared her experience from Cork. Info sharing, sharing their bank of information with colleagues is held in high importance.  Andrea shared CHO5 perspective – strong “circle of support” noted – CHO level meetings, Peer Supervision and Senior Social Work meetings in place.  Liam spoke of CHO9 having quarterly Social Work meetings and within this, local informal Social Work meetings are encouraged.  Emmet spoke of there being a plan to organise CHO8 Social Work meetings but these never materialised. The counties of Louth, Meath therefore operate and communicate separately to that of the counties of Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath. These midlands counties meet approximately every 3 months to share bank of resources, discuss what is working well/ not well in one area so that each area can adapt and learn. The absence of a Head of Discipline/ Principal Social Worker in the Midlands leads to a somewhat disconnect with Disability Management and places more of a need and importance on this type of Peer Social Work Support.  Agreed Actions / Outcome:  Bring back to next SiG meeting’s agenda to learn from what is taking place in other CHOs/ parts of the country. |
| **8.**  **A National picture of representation…** | Representation of Social Workers in PDS from all areas nationally/ CHOs will be desirable going forward.  Agreed Actions / Outcome:  Eibhlin, Colman and Emmet agreed to make contact with areas prior to next meeting to try ensure all areas are represented. |
| **9.**  **Apprenticeship Programme as commencing through UCC.** | * At 4:10pm through to 4:30pm, our SiG was joined for a presentation by Deborah Smullen (National HSE Lead for Social Care), Loretta Brady (HSE Apprenticeships Manager) and Fiachra O’Suilleabhain (UCC) to discuss the new Apprenticeship programme of Social Work qualification route – a level 9 qualification. * They shared that there is currently 38 apprentices – 12 in the HSE and 26 in TUSLA. * Next year, they hope to have 20 apprentices from the HSE and 70 from TUSLA. * Deborah advising they are seeking diversity in their intake. * As a potential reward to Mentors, they are working delivery of 5 credits at Masters level. Mentors have their own person to support them in their role. * The Apprentices will be in paid employment and Deborah advised that to address issues of recruitment and retention, this financial aspect is important. * Colman asked the question around richness of placement and queried if Apprentices can experience a variety of different placements. The response was that “there is capacity for Apprentices to carry out agency visits of up to a 2 week period”. It was articulated that “co-mentoring can be a possibility”. There was reference to CORU’s emphasis on learning and reference to the consortium’s considerations. * The presentation ran out time wise and details around clinical governance, HSE HR, CORU considerations, in the event of apprenticeship issues/ competencies not being met and a process around such were not discussed. * Relevant website: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/apprenticeships/sw/jobs/>)   Agreed Actions/ Outcome:   * Deborah, Loretta and Fiachra welcomed any further questions arising to be put forward to them but they advised in coming months, they will be seeking out Mentors as they plan to grow their intake numbers to their Apprenticeship programme. |
| **Next meeting:** | **28/11/2024 at 3pm - Online format** |

**Minute Taker:**

**Emmet Corrigan SW003017**

**Senior Social Worker, Barrow CDNT11 (Laois/ Offaly)**