

The Team around the Worker is not a standing group of professionals, but rather, a range of support (and challenge) opportunities to drive improved practice.

The Team around the Worker model is based on the commitment to ensure that Family Lead Professionals (and other roles) will take responsibility for delivering direct support to families where possible, only referring to other services when their own level or type of expertise is exceeded or surpassed.

The Team around the Worker model offers a way of working that requires the skill mix of staff to be used in a different way. Staff may need to develop new skills and work across traditional boundaries than previously so that they can work with a range of issues within families. In embedding the Team around the Worker model, there needs to be a range of opportunities for staff within the Multi-Agency Teams (MAT) to come together and learn from each other.

Many workers in the locality MAT's will be required to be Family Lead Professionals be supported in this through the Team around the Worker model.

There is also an expectation that key practitioners in some universal services, such as schools and early years settings can work in this way. To support this, there is a range of support mechanisms, some which sit inside the MAT locality teams and some which involve reaching out beyond the locality MAT's to schools and early years providers.

The idea is that from the perspective of the child and family, the bulk of the work alongside the family to address identified and assessed needs is carried out by the assigned Lead Professional. The Team around the Worker describes colleagues who are on hand to support the Lead Professional to deliver the work confidently and effectively to the family. If the family are open to children's social care, the social worker is always the lead professional.

Why is it important?

The adoption of a Team around the Worker model should see the following benefits:

- Enable us to use the capacity created to have more Tier 3 Family Lead Professionals
- Reduction in refer on leading to unsustainable waiting times for some specialist services
- More confident professionals learning from one another in the MATs and localities
- Excellent practice being shared across the localities
- Shorted term more impactful interventions by taking our 'referral delay'
- Stronger restorative practice and relationships with families
- Support for the pastoral workforce in schools and colleges

What families say to us:

In Portsmouth we have received a number of key messages over the years from families when we ask them about their experience of multi-agency support in the city.

These include:

- "I want a worker for my family not a worker for each of my problems"
- "Professionals don't turn up to TAC meetings and the everything just stops"
- "There are too many people involved in my family"
- "I keep getting different messages from different people working with me"

What practitioners say to us:

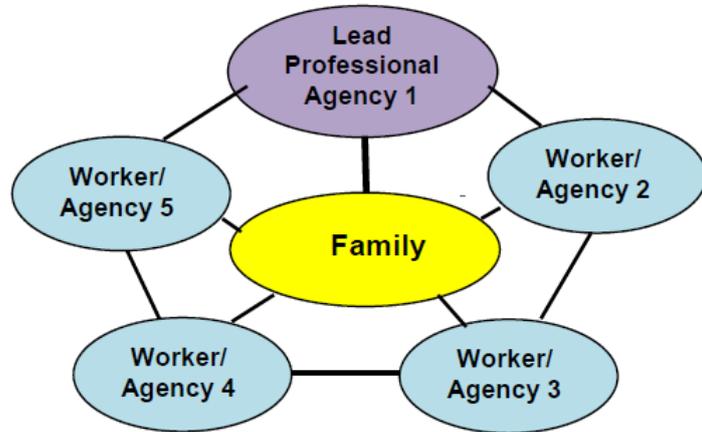
- There are too many Team around the Child meetings and we can't get to them all
- There is a 'refer-on' culture in the city

- We don't always have the skills or knowledge to work with a family on some issues - with a bit of support we could
- Ten minutes spent 'chewing over' a case with a colleague is far more efficient and affordable than referring a case to that professional unnecessarily

Team around the Family:

Key Features

- One of the agencies involved takes on the Lead Professional role
- Lead Professional uses the SAF assessment and resultant plan to co-ordinate the support of other agencies against the Plan
- Regular Team around the Child/Family meetings monitor progress and plan next support



Team around the Worker:

Key Features

Same as Team around the Family model (Lead Professional, SAF, plan etc.) but...

- The number of agencies working directly with the family is reduced
- The Lead Professional works with a wider range of presenting issues for the family - 'working with' not 'referring on'
- The Lead Professional has ready access to support, advice and guidance from a range of colleagues to support their work

