



Cardiff & Vale Integrated Family Support Team

Information for Professionals

Helping families make changes
and take control of their lives



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

The IFST delivers a crisis intervention services aimed at creating clear, measurable behavioural changes with families where there are serious Child Protection concerns relating to parental substance misuse.

We are a multi-disciplinary team who have been specifically trained in a range of evidence based models including Motivational Interviewing, Solution Focussed Brief Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to achieve positive results with families.

What we do

Our aim is to enable families to create a safe and supportive environment. One where parents and/or carers prioritise their children's needs and focus on family life and their responsibilities as a parent.

We work intensively with families where there are concerns due to parental substance misuse. Our intervention is primarily focused on building coping strategies and skills that enable people to resolve the crisis. They become empowered to focus on a more positive future with new hopes and new skills, new behaviours and new strategies that help prevent such situations reoccurring.

Child Protection

When parents or cares feel they are at risk of their children being removed, or having their names put on the Child Protection Register (CPR) they often feel at a loss to know what to do next, immobilised, afraid, confused, angry...

They may feel that their usual coping strategies are not working any more.

Research shows that without intervention, such a crisis lasts between four and six weeks*. This period provides a window of opportunity where people are most responsive to change. Without appropriate intervention they may revert to previous unhelpful patterns of behaviour. We work with families at this time to enable them to make real changes.

Rehabilitation

When children have been removed from the family home and there is a desire to rehabilitate there is often concern from professionals, children and families, that the children may go back to the same problems that caused them to be removed in the first place.

We use the same crisis intervention methods and tools to help families focus on what needs to be different, build their confidence, build hope that things can change and focus on how they are going to make that happen.

We will work with the family before and during the return home, remaining available to the family for 12 months after the child returns home.

Referral

- Children must be at active risk of accommodation or registration
- Children are to return home after a period of being looked after
- There is a parental drug or alcohol problem in the family
- Families with children at home must be in crisis and clearly aware that there is a real risk of their child(ren) being removed or their name being placed on the CPR if changes are not made.
- Children must have an allocated Social Worker who will continue to have case responsibility during our intervention
- The family agrees to a referral being made

In order to provide this service at the critical time, we do not have a waiting list. However, if the team is at capacity, a referral will still be taken and will be reviewed again when a space is available. Signposting and consultancy on effective ways of working with a family will also be available.

During the first few days after the referral we will meet the family and develop a safety plan that will be agreed with the referring social worker to ensure the family remain safe. We will keep in regular contact with the Social Worker throughout the intervention updating on progress made and any issues that might arise. Towards the end of the intensive phase of the intervention a meeting will be arranged with the family, case responsible social worker, intervention specialist and any other relevant people to discuss and review progress made by the family. A comprehensive final written report will be provided at the end of every intervention.

Frequency of contact

We offer an intensive intervention of 4 - 6 weeks

The intervention will be tailored to meet the families needs at times which are best suited for them, not necessarily between 9 - 5pm Monday to Friday but for a minimum of three days to a maximum of six weeks.

We work with the family in their home and provide as much (or as little) contact as necessary to achieve changes. We complete follow up sessions at 1, 3, 6 and 12 months where we review the goals set during the intensive phase of the intervention. In addition we can provide booster sessions at the request of the family and/or the Social Worker.

Contact us

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