

Child Poverty

Optimising uptake of money advice and income among families with children 0-5 years

Child poverty has a negative influence on health, education, social and physical development and can seriously harm a child's future life chances and opportunities.

The percentage of children 0-19 years living in poverty within South Lanarkshire is slightly below the Scottish average at 22%. However, some areas for example Blantyre is 29%, 6% above the national average.

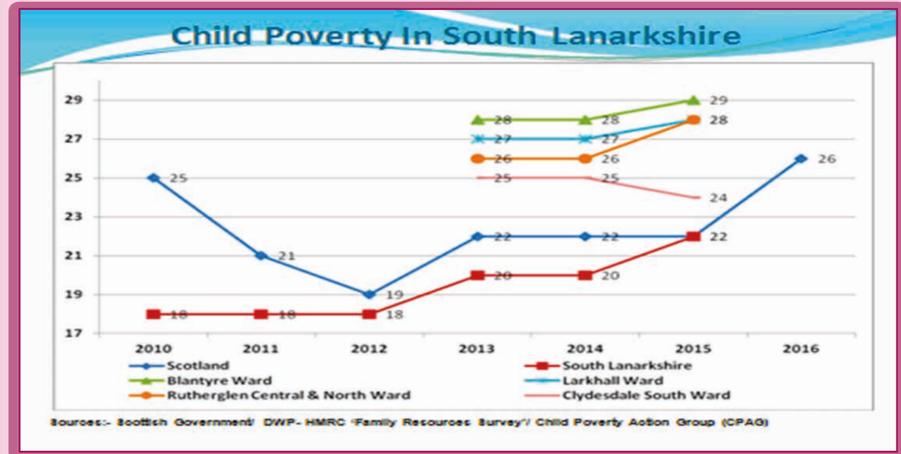


Chart 1

Evidence suggests that a large number of families entitled to benefits do not receive them. The universal health visiting (HV) pathway proposes routine enquiry for money worries as a professional standard at all key child health surveillance (CHS) contacts commencing at 0-6 weeks.

Project aim

Our theory is that a financial inclusion pathway incorporating routine enquiry for money worries will produce effective referrals between universal health visiting services, parents/carer's and money advice support services improving access to quality advice and support.

Spread aim: – 10% increase in parental engagement with the Telephone Advice Line (TAL) across South Lanarkshire by May 2018 (baseline 71%)

Methodology

- Starting small with one HV team in Blantyre (predominately children in SIMD quintiles 1 and 2) and SLC Money Matters Advice Service (MMAS) to develop and test the change package
- Health visitor champion identified within Blantyre Team and Spread teams
- Process mapping to identify the key process of implementing routine enquiry in practice and referral route to the MMAS visualising where we wanted to be
- Locality HV team and managers briefing session on revised SIMD demography and child poverty data
- Utilised the model for improvement and iterative testing with PDSA cycles
- Guided by the Institute of Healthcare Improvement scale up framework to deliver our improvements at scale

Change package

- Routine enquiry at universal pathway contacts 0-6 weeks and 27 months.
- Child poverty information 'prompt' to facilitate discussion with families around financial wellbeing and income maximisation. (Figure1)
- Financial Inclusion pathway developed and was the standardised process tested
- Child Poverty/Financial inclusion 'learning set' for staff



Figure 1

Outcomes and Results

Within the team we are able to demonstrate a sustained 100% reliability of routine enquiry by 6 week child health review.

Chart 2

Outcome measure, illustrates parents have been engaging positively with money matters advice service (TAL) with an 8% increase in engagement from a baseline of 71% exceeding our aim.

Chart 3

Process Measure, using the improvement run chart rules has seen an 18 point increase from the baseline of 8 per month to 26 per month, demonstrating improvement since September 2017.

Chart 4

Balancing Measure, shows a median of 66% of families referred lived within SIMD 1 and 2, evidencing that we are reaching and maximizing income into the poorest households.

Chart 5

In addition to the spread of the change package, Outcome, process and balancing measures we wanted to capture the financial impact for those who were supported. Therefore we gathered evidence from a smaller sample of 20 parents who engaged with TAL.

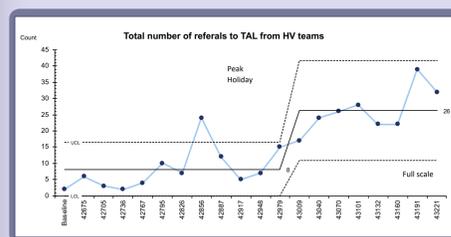


Chart 2

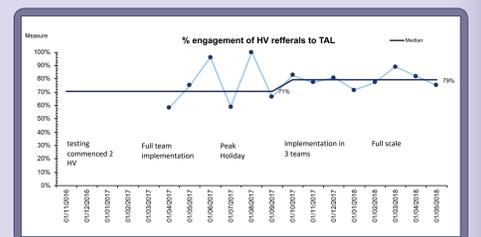


Chart 3

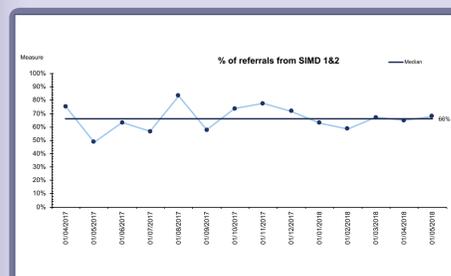


Chart 4

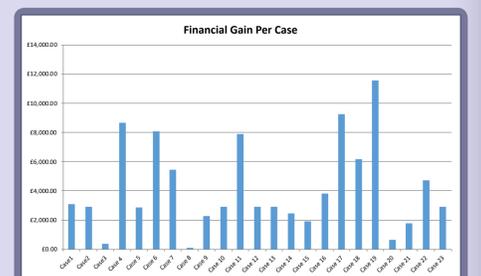


Chart 5

Key learning

- Introduction of Routine Enquiry as a service standard proved to be a reliable process in supporting families to access money advice services. This will now be spread to the 13 month and 4 year child health review
- HV staff identified that the first visit to a new family was not the optimum time to discuss the sensitive issue of money worries and implemented routine enquiry in the period 0-6 weeks post delivery
- There was improved recording of future action by staff within the national CHS documentation
- We captured an increased level of selective enquiry as a result of increased awareness and reliable pathway process for referral
- Changes to the money advice telephone service were made to include locality based money advice offices as the service responded to the complexity of referrals by HV staff
- An impact prediction analysis on money advice services will be made as we scale up this work across South Lanarkshire HV Teams

For the sample of 20 families £100,000 from one health visiting team



Scale and spread

- The service improvement has been spread and scaled to all ten Health visiting teams in South Lanarkshire with a spread plan in progress pan Lanarkshire.

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References: www.jrf.org.uk/system/files/2301-child-poverty-costs.pdf

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The cost of child poverty for individuals and society, 2008

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