

1

Whole Family Approach

Many social service systems approach family well-being from an individualistic, fragmented, and crisis-oriented perspective. We aim to change that by using the Whole Family Approach.

This approach is a family-led strategy that provides services working with adults and children with the tools they need to engage families, set goals together, create plans, and to achieve those goals. Considering the person's needs within the context in which they live helps recognise what's important to them as part of a family unit as well as individually and builds on the collective strengths of the family and their support network. It also means that everyone must think about the impact of the care needs of the adult on their family, including any children they have.

The Whole-Family Approach builds on everyone's strengths and develops their resilience. It also promotes working together with carers as partners, as well as the adult and other members of the family and friends where appropriate.

2

Why Whole Family Approach

Embedding the family approach means seeing each person as an individual, as well as recognising the part they play in their family and community.

The Whole Family Approach breaks down silos in existing social services. It puts equal priority on the needs of adults and children and enables seamless collaboration among multiple organizations to support a family's plans.

The principle promotes wellbeing, and it is prevention rather than crisis driven.

Understanding the needs of the whole family and getting them to think about the outcomes they want to achieve individually, as well as a family is vital. It means the worker can then provide the right guidance, information and services.

During the assessment, the worker can give guidance and information to help the family understand the situation, their needs and strengths. This can help to reduce or delay any increase in the adult's needs and make sure that they have support when they need it.

3

Questions to ask at First contact

Family-related questions must be embedded in processes at first contact and subsequently, such as:

- Who else lives in your house?
- Who helps with your support and who else is important in your life?
- Is there anyone that you provide support or care for?
- Is there a child in the family (including stepchildren, children of partners or extended family)?
- Does any parent need support in their parenting role?

The whole-family approach should make sure that everyone's needs, and wellbeing are considered (including any children), that there are no consequences for anyone that had not been seen in advance and that everyone agrees with the plan.

4

Get the Whole Picture

- Is there a joint protocol between children and adult services outlining roles and collaboration?
- Is information shared on family members' assessments and care plans from other organisations?
- Are proportionate assessments done appropriately for families?
- Are care providers identified and involved in assessments, with their expertise and views included?
- Have carers been fully assessed when household needs arise?
- Has a young carer's needs assessment been considered under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, if applicable?
- If a child in need is identified, is it discussed with a manager, and a referral made to children's services?
- Are carers eligible for their own assessments?

7

Tools To use with the Whole Family Approach

Practical tools for working with families include:

- questions to consider including in conversations at initial contact, assessment and care planning stages.
- whole-family care planning discussion questions.
- a genogram
- how to identify support networks.
- an emergency crisis plan.

Think Family

6

No concerns on face value

In all instances, even when a person can achieve an outcome independently, consideration is given to any impact on others and whether they might be adversely impacting on the health or safety of others, particularly family members and including children. At assessment, all a person's eligible needs are identified regardless of whether such needs are being met by any carer.

When looking at eligible needs, consideration of the ability to maintain family or other significant relationships, including with any children, and the impact of these not being maintained on the adult's wellbeing is always considered. This applies to both the person in need of care and support and their carer.

5

A Plan that works for everyone

Support planning must consider the wellbeing of all the family and the impact of any services and support on other family members.

Support planning to involve any carer and consideration is given to the involvement of other family members.

Consideration is given to how a person's circle of support can be developed, where this might benefit them.

Where the local authority is going to meet the needs of multiple people in the same family, can consideration be given to producing a combined plan.

Where plans are integrated, a lead organisation is established to undertake monitoring and assurance, and it is clear about when the plan will be reviewed and by whom.