



REVIEW OF COMMUNITY MOTHERS PROGRAMME

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Why a review?

**To establish the current status
of the Community Mothers Programme in Ireland
with a view to the development of a strategic plan
for the future of the Programme**

Origins of Community Mothers Programme in Ireland

- **Walter Barker 1979 Bristol University**
- **Childhood Development Programme**
- **First Parent Health Visitor Scheme**
- **1983 Dublin – Pilot - Brenda Molloy**
- **Community Mother Model**
- **Family Development Nurse**
- **Bernard Van Leer Foundation**

First time parents

0-1 year (extend to 2 yrs)

1 hr visit once a month

Geographically targeted

20 families per CM

Parent sheets / materials

Research

- Johnson, Z., Howell, F., & Molloy, B. (1993). Community Mothers Programme: randomised controlled trial of non professional intervention in parenting. *British Medical Journal*, 1449-1452.
- Johnson, Z., & Molloy, B. (1995). The Community Mothers Programme: Empowerment of Parents by Parents. *Children and Society*, 73-85.
- Fitzpatrick, P., Molloy, B., & Johnson, Z. (1997). Community mothers programme: extension to the Traveller community in Ireland. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 229:303.
- Johnson, Molloy, Fitzpatrick, Scallan, Rooney, Keegan and Byrne. (2000). Community Mothers Programme: Seven year follow up of a randomised controlled trial of non professional intervention in parenting. *Journal of public health medicine*, 337-342.
- European Platform for Investing in Children

Original Model

- Family Development Nurse
- Health Board
- Had a Programme Director
- Barker materials and training
- Bernard Van Leer Foundation
- 11 Programme areas in Eastern Health Board
- Southern Health Board (Kerry)

Community Model

- Coordinator
- Com & vol. structure
- No Programme Director
- Barker materials and training
- Bernard Van Leer Foundation
- Mid-Western; Midlands and North Eastern Health Board areas
- South & North Tipperary; Athlone merged Longford / Westmeath
- Parents First Laois / Offaly
- 0-2 Programme Docklands

Eastern Health Board Area

Overview of changes	2013	2017
Programme Director	1	0
Catchment areas	11	2
Family Development Nurses	9	2
Volunteer Coordinators	3	0
Community Mothers	119	18
Families availing of the Programme	1891	205

Programmes closed 2013-2017

Dublin North – Darndale/Coolock

Dublin North Central – Ballymun

Dublin West – Neilstown Ballyfermot

Dublin West – Clondalkin

Dublin South City – Ringsend

Dublin South West – Tallaght

Dublin South East – Ballinteer

Kildare / West Wicklow – Newbridge

Wicklow – Bray

Finglas
Community Mothers
Programme

Loughlinstown
Community Mothers
Programme

Limerick
Community Mothers
Programme

Longford/
Westmeath
Community Mothers
Programme

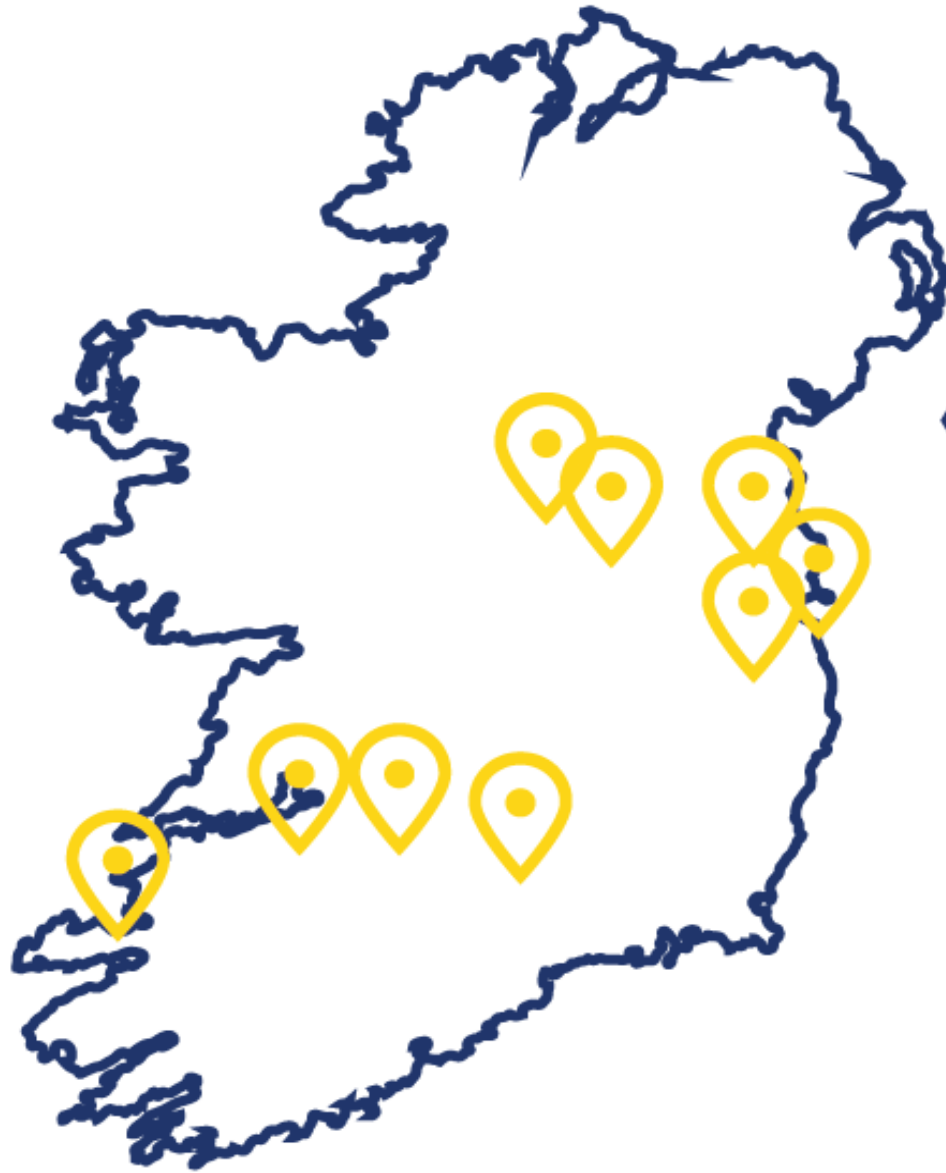
Clonmel
Community Mothers
Programme

North Tipperary
Community Mothers
Programme

Kerry
Community Parents
Support Programme

Laois/Offaly
Parents 1st

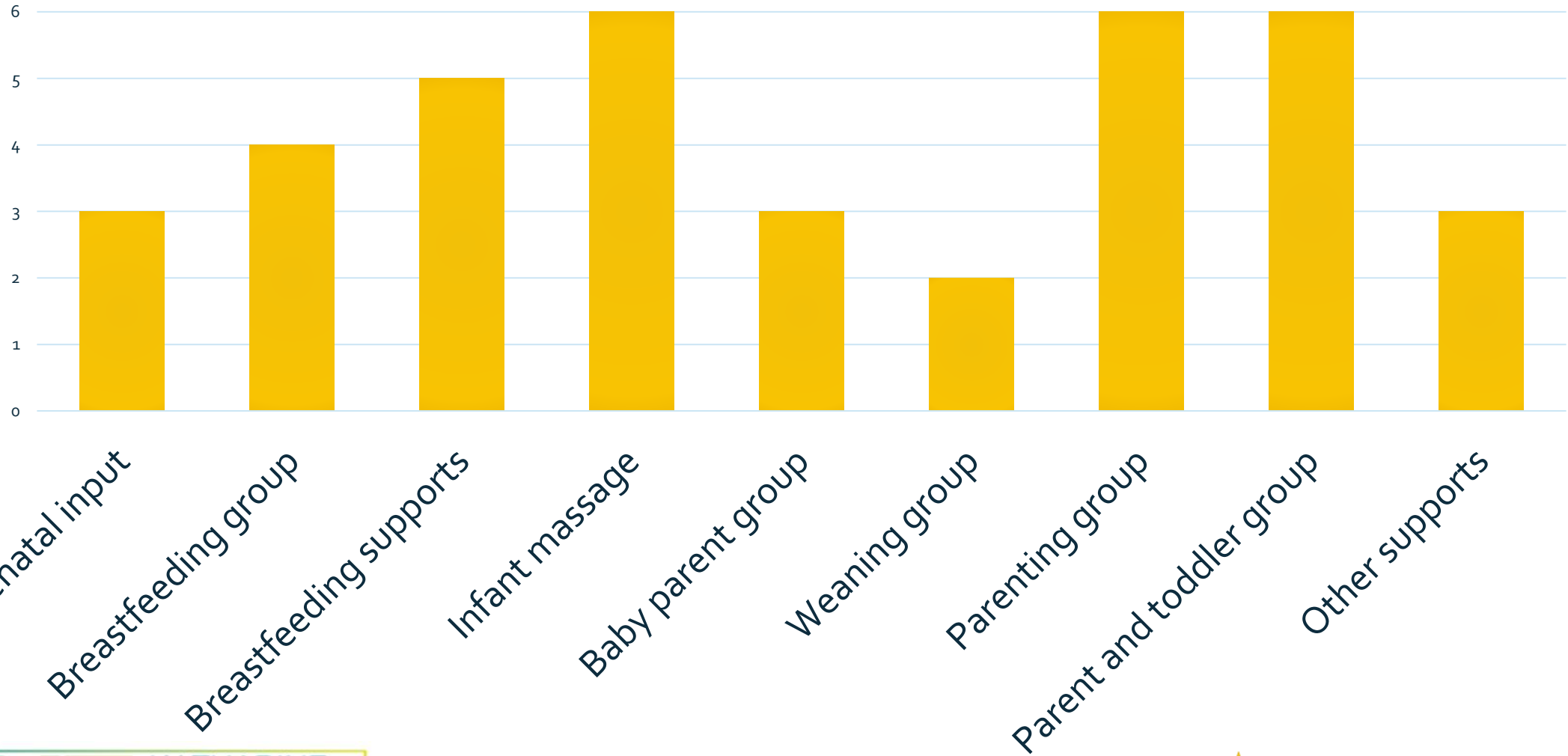
Dublin Docklands
0-2 Programme



CORE PROGRAMME CONTENT



Community wrap-around supports



Aims



Building trust

Non-judgemental

Listening

Whole family

Gentle encouragement

Strong relationships

Strengths based

Person-centred

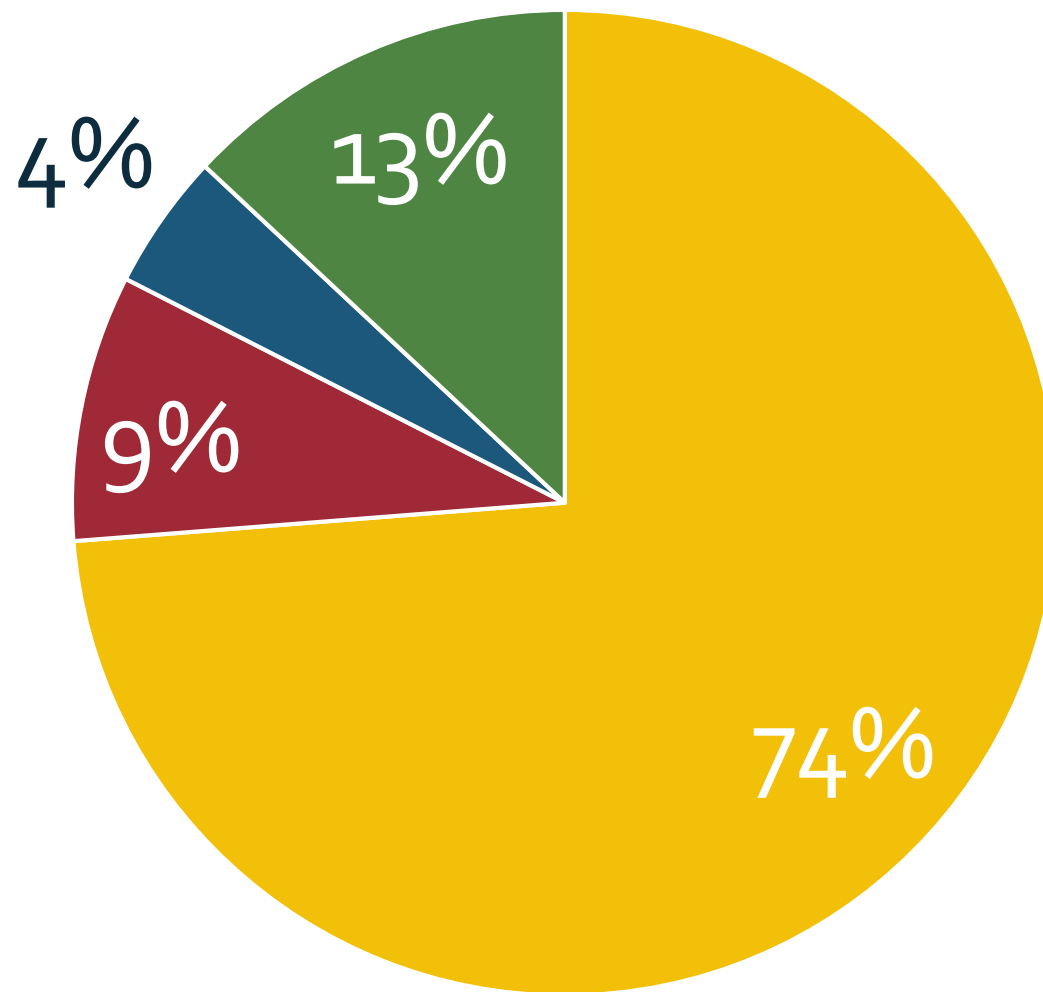
Respect and honesty

On their side

Patient

Ethos

Referrals



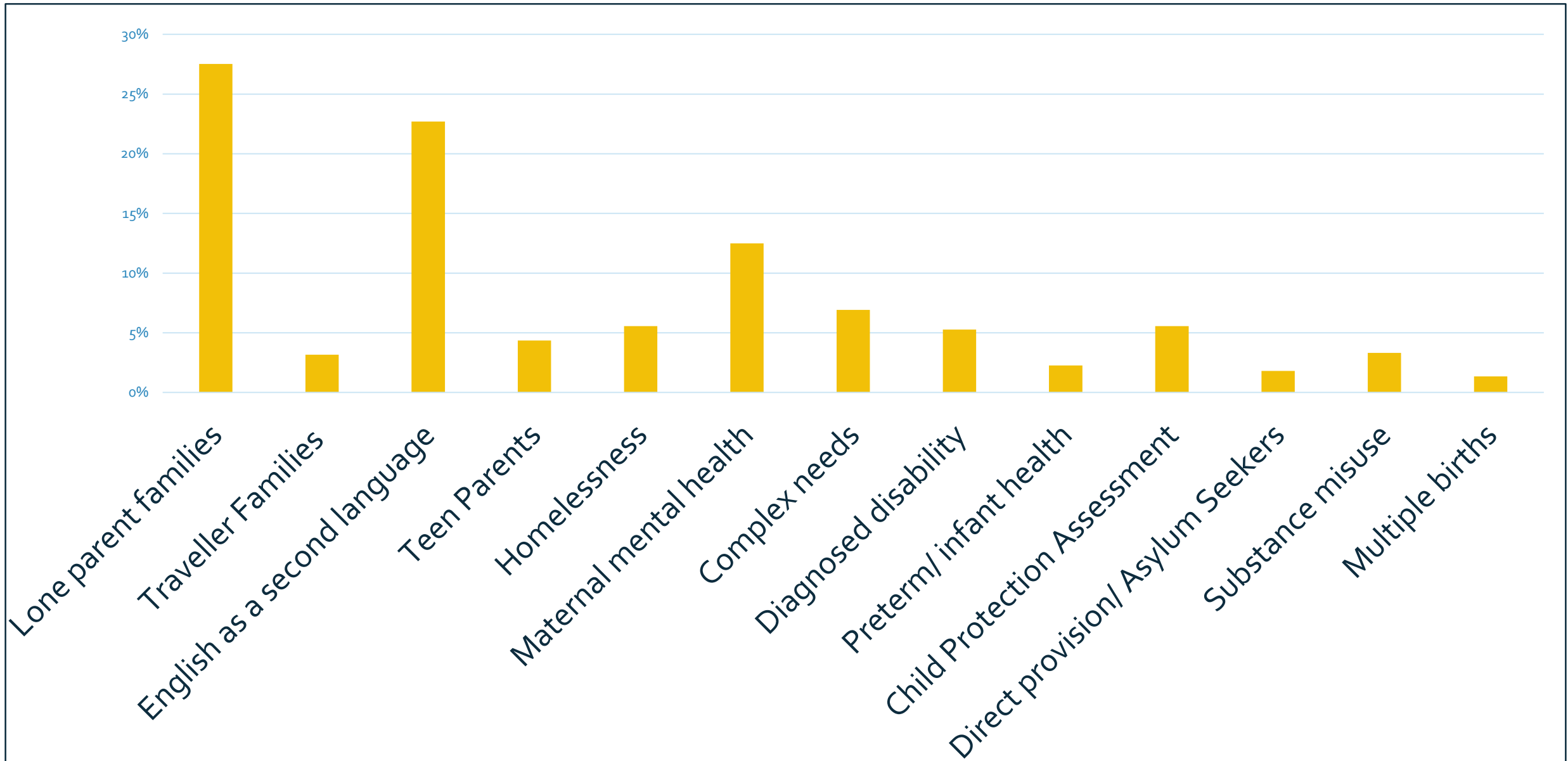
■ HSE

■ Tusla

■ Com & vol.

■ Self referral

★ The Community Foundation for Ireland



Community Mothers



82% QQI Level 5 or higher
56% QQI Level 6-9



54 years = average age
38-71 years = age range



9 years = average length
of service



Paid Model:
5 CMP sites pay
€11-16.50 per hour

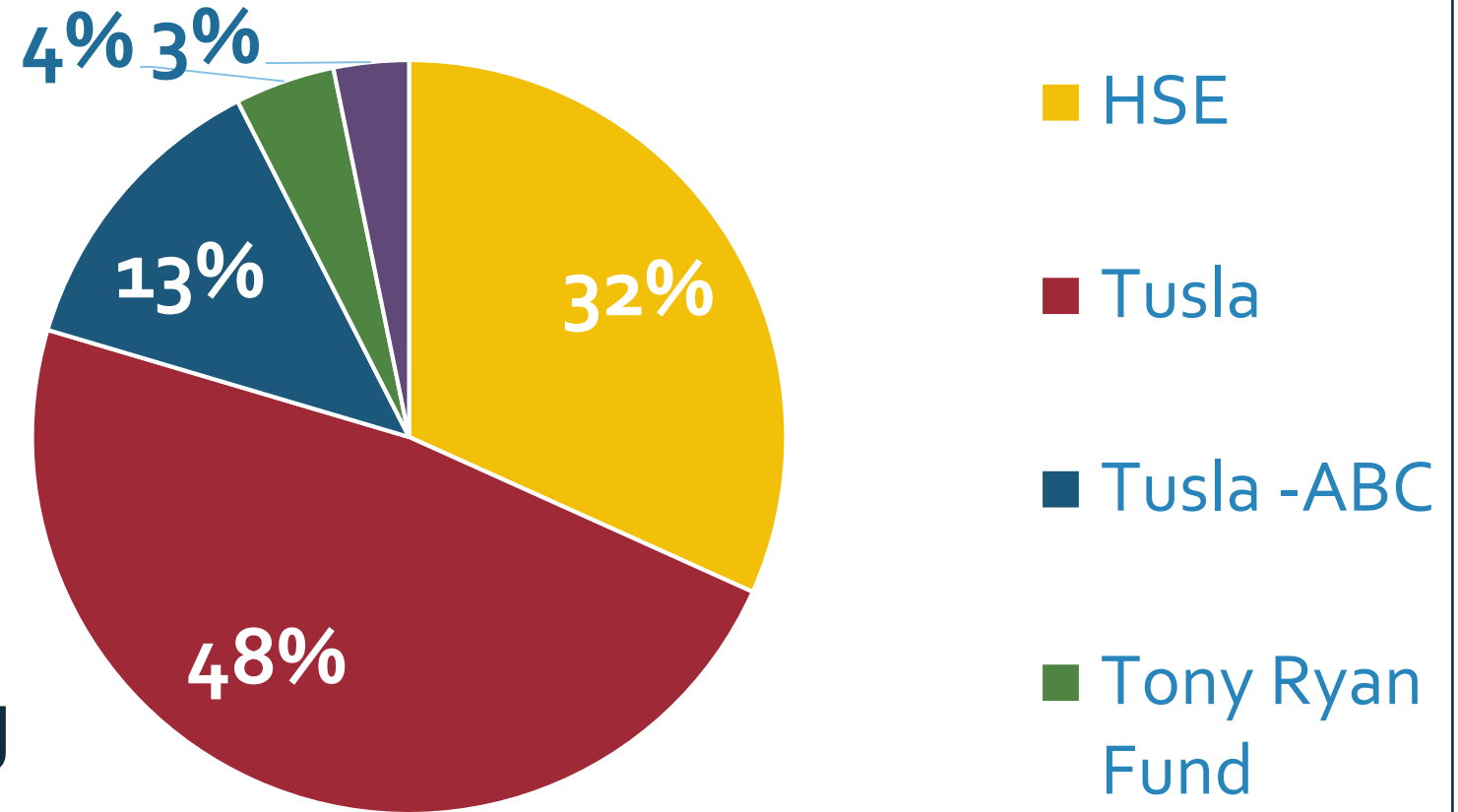


Volunteer Model:
3 CMP sites pay a stipend
of €8-10 per hour
1 CMP site pays mileage only

Funding levels

Total income received	Tusla	ABC <i>(now Tusla)</i>	HSE	CCC	Tony Ryan Tipperary Fund	Other
100%	48%	13%	32%	0%	4%	3%
€973,232	€465,657	€125,526	€308,908	€4,370	€41,764	€27,007

Funding sources



2017: 20% of all funding was at imminent risk

Parents

“She gave me all the information, and breastfeeding support – I just finished breast feeding for nearly 3 years”

“I never felt judged”

“She really focused on my wellbeing and me as being the most important factor in caring for my baby”

“Well it was so different to other services, she took a real holistic point of view.”

Areas of support listed by parents

Breastfeeding

When a child in the family has an additional need

Parent/child bond and parental confidence

Parents and families undergoing social work assessment or custody situations

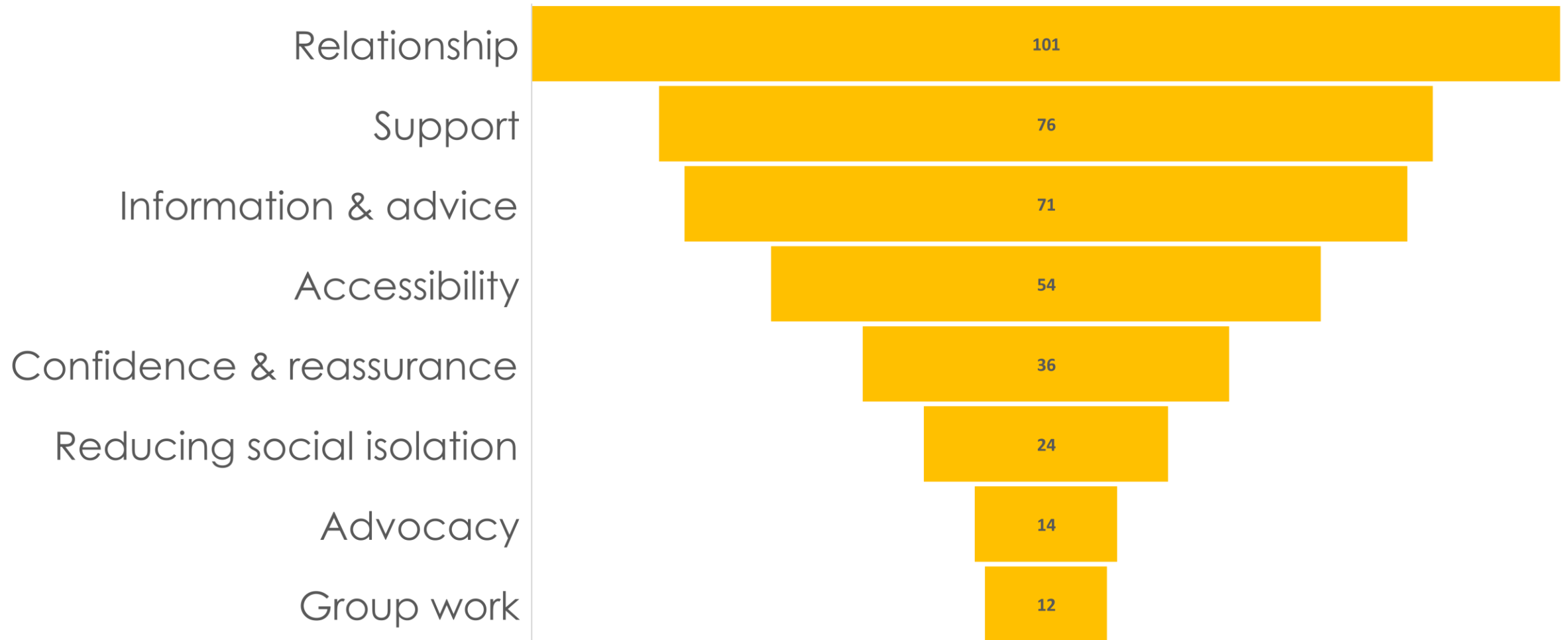
Maternal mental health

Good nutrition and weaning

Breaking the cycle of parenting behaviours within a family and across generations

Parents who do not have a social network or who are parenting alone

What parents valued?



Relationship - explored

Informality

Different to
other services

Patience

Gentle
encouragement

Responsive

Confidential

Personal

Not pushy

Listening

Kindness/
empathy

Non
judgemental

Professional

Welcoming

Local stakeholders

Highly regarded

Limited, if any, duplication

Positive working relationships

Strong interagency working (a minority with limited engagement)

Vulnerability of funding – Health funding

Can provide key supports to high need families

Need for updating, reviewing and clarifying model

Stakeholder

'They are really respectful of families and that's what works'
Stakeholder

They are just so wary of social workers, but they needed support and the Community Mothers Programme was just so accessible and acceptable'
Stakeholder

It's really practical and it adapts to the needs of the mothers and the community'
Stakeholder

'Competent, capable and professional'
Stakeholder

'Really good at engaging parents'
Stakeholder

Challenges



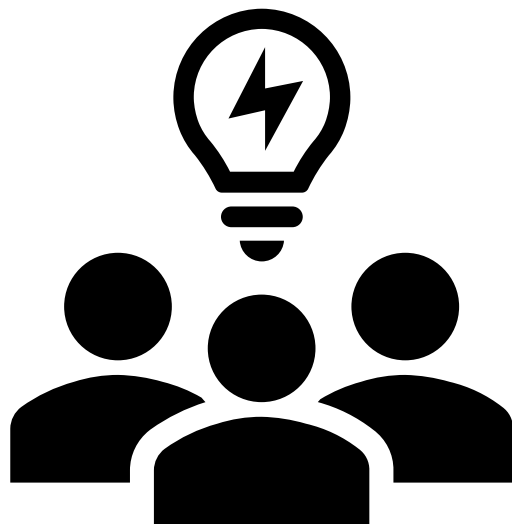
Meeting families needs

Funding

Interagency

Organisational

Opportunities



Health

Parenting and Family Support

Addressing Child Poverty

Cost effective prevention and early intervention

'...building on the current PHN home visitation programme, an approach to home visiting services, across a continuum of need, will be agreed, having regard to Irish evidence on the implementation of prevention and early intervention initiatives.'

(First 5, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2018).

What works?

What works to promote better outcomes in para-professional home visiting?

Antenatal engagement

Training and support and supervision of home visiting staff

The duration of the service (e.g. 2+years) and the frequency of the visits (e.g. weekly)

The content of the home visit sessions – a core structure

Responsiveness to the wider needs of the parent and the family as a whole

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Outcome of review

Differences + core similarities

Strong parental satisfaction – relationship at the core

Highly regarded by local stakeholders

Challenges and sustainability

Unique opportunity to realise its potential

Consistent updated, evidence informed outcome focused national model

Towards a national model

Standardise criteria

Age profile of child; progressive universalism; geographic catchment area; priority criteria

Programme

Home visiting as core element, wider supports to families; community based wraparound groups

Materials

Standard evidence based manual; information & tip sheets; family friendly evaluation method

Home visitors

Recruitment & induction; professional development; support & supervision; pay, terms & conditions

Operations

Electronic data gathering & CRM system; national profile; referral pathways ; promotional information

Governance

National steering group; local governance supports; national coordination

Short term recommendations

Bring together key funders to develop a future strategic agreement

- Explore future commitments to the Programme
- To explore and develop a process for a national model
- To address urgent site specific sustainability concerns

Medium and long term recommendations

Medium term: Develop a national future strategy

- National governance and oversight of development phase
- National model
- National profile and promotion

Long term: Evaluation

' It's amazing the impact one person can have on your life, at that very stressful and vulnerable time, the role of one person can make a considerable impact on you and then your family ' Parent