DCLG Publications & Consultations

1. Development of the new LAA framework - Operational Guidance Summary

This is the second part of two-stage guidance on the negotiation process for negotiating a new Local Area Agreement (LAA). This stage clarifies the operational process for negotiating LAAs that flow from the Comprehensive Spending Review. A range of case studies have been developed to demonstrate how LAAs have been used successfully to tackle a variety of issues. Links to these documents and specific toolkits to assist partners in the development of LAAs can be found at:
www.communities.gov.uk/
publications/localgovernment/
laaoperationalguidance

2. An Introduction to the Local Performance Framework - Delivering Better Outcomes for Local People

This has been jointly produced by the Department and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides a clear overview for all those helping to implement the new performance framework, including local area agreements (LAAs). A detailed timetable is also included.
www.communities.gov.uk/
publications/localgovernment/
localperformanceframework

3. Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance: Draft for Consultation

This document provides guidance to local authorities and their partners on creating strong safe and prosperous communities, specifically relating to new legislation introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The guidance covers:

- Local Strategic Partnerships,
- Sustainable Community Strategies,
- the new duty to involve,
- Local Area Agreements,
- the revised best value regime and
- commissioning.

The closing date for responses is 12 February 2008.
www.communities.gov.uk/
publications/localgovernment/
statutoryguidance
All of the above were published by DCLG on 20th November.

Describing the Needs of Children Presenting to Children's Services: Reliability & Validity

Donald Forrester, Anna Fairtlough & Yommi Bennet. Journal of Children's Services Volume 2 Issue 2 August 2007 © Pavilion Journals (Brighton) Ltd

Abstract

Children's social services in England and Wales deal with a wide range of referrals of children who are or may be 'in need'. Finding ways of describing the issues that present in such referrals is important if we wish to understand the nature of the work of children's services and explore different interventions and outcomes.

Yet there have been few attempts to describe the full range of needs presenting to social services, and no studies of the reliability or validity of attempts to define the types of need. In this article the legal definitions of need, a typology developed by Sinclair et al, a related one used by the Department of Health and one developed within the current study were compared for reliability and construct validity.

There were two main findings. First, it was found that while the presence of needs could generally be agreed on in all the schemes, ascriptions of a 'main' need were not made reliably. This is important because a 'main' need has been used in both research and statistical returns to government. Second, while existing schemes appeared well suited to describing allocated cases, they were less able to describe the range of needs presenting in all referrals to social services.