

SW RI Network

The Care Review

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Overview

1. Reset children's social care
2. A revolution in Family Help
3. A just and decisive child protection system
4. Unlocking the potential of family networks
- 5. Transforming care**
- 6. The care experience**



Chapter 5 – **transforming care**

- new universal care standards should be introduced covering all types of care
- the commissioning and running of children's homes, recruitment and training of foster carers, must be moved into new Regional Care Cooperatives
- a “new deal” for Foster Care
- a new ‘opt-out’ legal right to advocacy for all children in care



drivers

- Negative population level data
- Positive impact of care, including residential care
- Complexity of standards and legislation
- Failure to meet these standards
- Voice of young people with care experience



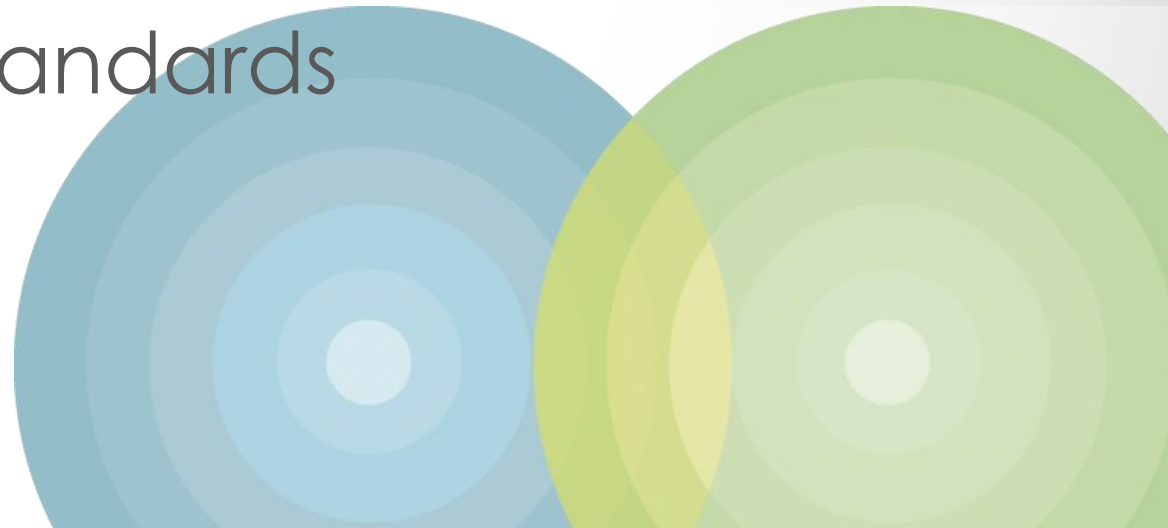
Unregulated accommodation

- serious concerns about children's experiences whilst living in these homes
- Children need care
- Providing support, not care, will be a perverse incentive to reduce support for fear of breaching regulation
- Press ahead for now, ahead of new Care Standards
- All semi-independent accommodation should offer a good standard of care and to be able to keep children safe whilst also being flexible enough to meet a broad range of needs.



Deprivation of liberty

- Too few suitable homes/staff for children with skills to meet needs of children who may be a danger to themselves or others, or who are being exploited
- Homes reluctant due to adverse inspection outcomes
- 462% rise in DoLS in last 3 years
- Lack of flexibility in current standards



New, universal, flexible **care standards**

- Across children's homes, fostering and supported
- Shorter, value based, designed by experts and YP
- Ambitious
- Not defined!



Regional commissioning model

- Weak market oversight – not Ofsted's role and only 56% of LAs have up to date sufficiency strategy
- Risk of default by a large provider (fearing an exit like Southern Cross)
- High cost and profiteering
- Poor planning and lack of coordination
- Lack of engagement in frameworks and too much spot purchasing



Regional Care Cooperatives

- Sufficiency duty in an area
- Running and creating new public sector fostering, residential and secure services for the region
- Commissioning not-for-profit **and** private sector provider care as necessary and where choose to
- Local authorities will no longer perform these functions but will be involved in the running of RCCs



Functions of RCC

- Plan, commission and run homes
- Stronger planning model, reduce provider dominance, shared burden of vacancies, buy capacity rather than spot purchase, financial confidence to develop own provision
- Exempt small homes from planning regulations
- Recruit and train foster carers
- Secure homes



Governance of RCC

- Owned by and fully accountable to Las#
- Driven by the leadership, culture and values of best performing LAs with one or two selected to oversee the set up of their RCC



Ofsted

- Extend powers to market oversight
- Legislate to allow access and interrogation of financial records and accounts of providers
- New powers to take action where high financial risk
- Develop inhouse capability with input from CQC
- RCC inspection
- Focus on children being placed close to home



Funding of RCCs

- Set up funding from government, then LAs
- RCC charges relevant LA for placement
- Ability at scale to take greater financial risk to set up homes



1

Provide oversight, direction, funding, and data on needs of children



- Social worker in local authority A thinks a case has met threshold and seeks a legal planning meeting locally
- Local authority A advise whether the case has met threshold, if it's proceeding to court and care could be an option.
- Social worker gains permissions from local authority A to look for a home and submits request for a home to RCC



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RCCs

Provide oversight to ensure quality and consistency across homes as well as greater utilisation of data to improve forecasting, greater scale and specialist skills allowing:

- Social worker provides matching requirements e.g. home for siblings, within 30 mins of home, can stay at the same school
- And speaks to a home finder



- RCC searches all homes available and considers additional services that may be required



- A range of homes and services are offered to the social worker



- If appropriate the social worker discusses options with children and family before making a decision about what home would best meet the children's needs
- Local authority funds the place that meets children's needs
- Continues to make all decisions about where the child should live



Interactions with private market through block contracting, negotiating for investment to meet local need

Managing matching and setting rates and training standards for internal foster carers and local authority owned children's homes

Investing in new provision where needed for the entire region. Recruiting and assessing more foster carers for the region



3



Local Authorities

Get higher quality homes, greater range of options at more cost effective prices. Allows them to focus on wrap around support for child and family in the community

profit

- We should have a sector free from profit and distorting impacts of a financial market
- Considered price caps, capping profit margins, banning profit, nationalisation – either these models do not go far enough or would have unintended consequences for children
- RCC model gives Las the power to rebuild publicly owned and not-for-profit foster and residential homes.
- Long term plan to reduce spot purchasing and match supply to demand
- Recommends 20% windfall tax on last 5 years' profits for 15 largest providers of residential and fostering

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Independent advocacy for children

- Current system ineffective as lack sufficient independence from those providing services
- Roles themselves are complicated – too many professionals which reduces trust and dilutes accountability
- Removal of IRO role – increase expectation on social workers. Managers or an experienced SW to chair meetings
- Opt out advocacy for all children in care
- Attends planning meetings and no significant decisions made without input of the child with or via advocate
- Comment on quality of care provided by children's homes and foster care

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Three options

1. National advocacy service
2. Repurpose CAFCASS
3. Expand role of the children's commissioner's Help at Hand service

- Funded by local authorities
- Children's Commissioner given powers to escalate individual cases
- Annual advocacy report



Regulation 44 replaced by advocacy service

- Monthly visit by an advocate to report on quality & safety
- Speak to all children
- Home to respond to advocate's feedback
- Feedback to children's commissioner
- Advocates do not currently have specialist knowledge, so would receive dedicated training to perform a role equivalent to Reg44



5 missions for care leavers

- no young person should leave care without at least two loving relationships, by 2027
- double the proportion of care leavers attending university, and particularly high tariff universities, by 2026
- create at least 3,500 new well paid jobs and apprenticeships for care leavers each year, by 2026
- reduce care experience homelessness now, before ending it entirely
- to increase the life expectancy of care experienced people, by narrowing health inequalities with the wider population

