

Safeguarding and community inclusion

Final Project Report

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1. Background

Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk Local Safeguarding Children Boards were funded by the Department for Education (DfE) to undertake an innovative project that pools knowledge and concerns across the Boards to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding practice. The three Boards had shared concerns about the way agencies work with Eastern European migrant families, particularly around the identification of safeguarding risks and delivering effective interventions with children and young people. Originally the proposal was to complete this project within a two year timeframe; however, the constrictions around funding criteria meant that there was only one year in which to complete this work.

2. Project structure

The project had three phases

- Community engagement
- Training
- Developing practice guidance

Performance data was collected and collated in order to provide further evidence to inform and support the progress of the project. This task proved difficult due to the way in which information is recorded at a local and national level. One of the key factors within this is that whilst ethnicity is regularly recorded nationality is collected less frequently. This work was time consuming and a project data report is presented in Annex 1 of this report.

3. Community engagement

The initial stage of the project was community engagement in order to identify and clarify the risks, concerns and issues for both the eastern European communities and the services that are engaging with them or seeking to engage with them.

Service users

Whilst the remit of the project is to work across the whole of the three local authority areas, the face to face engagement was focused on the areas of Kings Lynn, Wisbech and Peterborough. The collection of data for this consultation was directed wherever it was identified that contact with eastern European families could be made using existing links. This means that the project is unlikely to have received responses from the most isolated members of the community who do not have contact with any of the openings we identified and engaged with.

Engagement with service users was carried out using three methods: a printed questionnaire, one to one discussions and through focus groups. Face to face consultation was carried out with 149 eastern Europeans. The questionnaire was completed by 246 participants.

Service providers

Engagement with service providers was carried out using an electronic survey, single agency discussion and multi-agency focus groups. The e-survey was circulated amongst staff across the whole of the three local authority areas. In the electronic survey there were 162 completed responses and the mix of respondents from the three local authority areas was well balanced: 32% of responses were from staff working in the Peterborough area and 35% from both Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Face to face consultation was carried out with a total of 189 staff in a variety of arenas including multi-agency groups and single agency meetings ranging in size from two participants to 63.

There appears to be a lack of confidence amongst some members of staff around engaging with eastern European migrant families. For some this arises from not having enough knowledge about the cultural differences leading to anxiety about offending them.

During the consultation there were several individuals and groups who identified that the treatment of eastern Europeans by some service providers was unacceptable ranging from intolerance through to racist comments and behaviours.

There is a clear need for training for staff in order to address the lack of culturally competent service provision.

The range of quality of interpretation and translation services requires greater monitoring and quality assurance.

Amongst the eastern European community there was limited knowledge about the requirements of UK law regarding the safety and well-being of children. Knowledge was mainly gained through word of mouth from fellow nationals. The majority of those consulted felt that they had limited knowledge about services. Despite this nearly all were registered with a GP and the percentage using children's centres were within the range of the UK national average. There is a high level of anxiety and low levels of trust and confidence within eastern European communities about the services that are provided locally. Migrant families are not receiving all the information that they need in order to make informed choices about using services

The full report of the community engagement stage is available in Annex 1

4. Training programme

Following the consultation that was carried out in stage 1 of this Innovations project a training course was developed and delivered. This course was developed using the information and evidence gained from the consultation process and to address the key competencies identified in the LSCBs' practice guidance. The course was piloted twice, once in Huntingdon and then repeated in Kings Lynn. The evaluations from this course along with the input from independent observers were used to revise the course which was then rolled out across the three authorities. It was delivered nine times to 149 staff. Overall 189 staff were trained. Evaluation forms were completed at the end of the training and then an impact assessment form was sent out to participants one month after the conclusion of the course in order to make an assessment of the impact that the training had upon their practice. The evaluation information that follows is taken from feedback from the 149 who attended the revised course.

Participants were asked to give an overall rating of the course. 89% rated the course as either Excellent or Very Good.

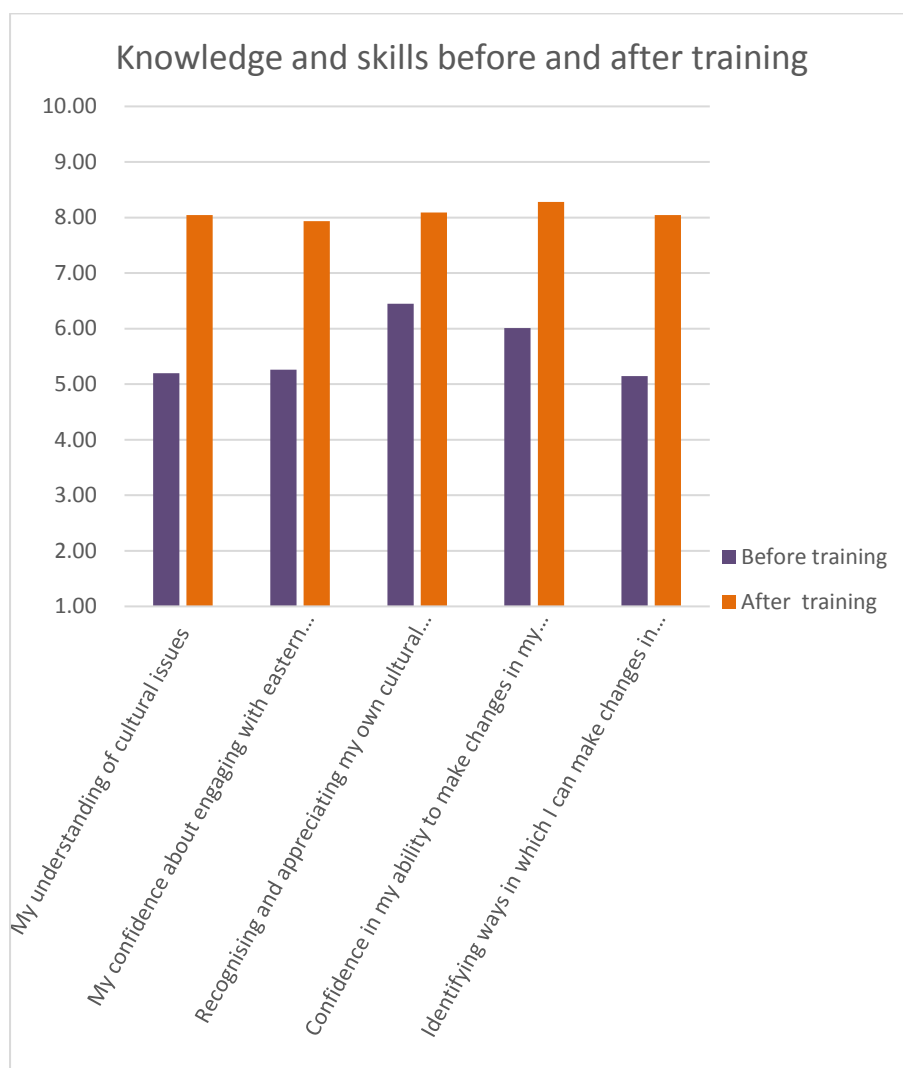
At each training event participants were asked to self-assess their level of skills and knowledge before and after the training in relation to the following statements on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is low and 10 is high):

1. My understanding of cultural issues
2. My confidence about engaging with Eastern European families

3. Recognising and appreciating my own cultural perspective
4. Confidence in my ability to make changes in my working practice that will make it more inclusive
5. Identifying ways in which I can make changes in my practice to better engage families with an Eastern European background.

Taking the average from all participants in the training there was a positive shift across all of these factors. The greatest change was in number 5 (2.9) and the smallest shift was in number 3 (1.64) see figure 1 below:

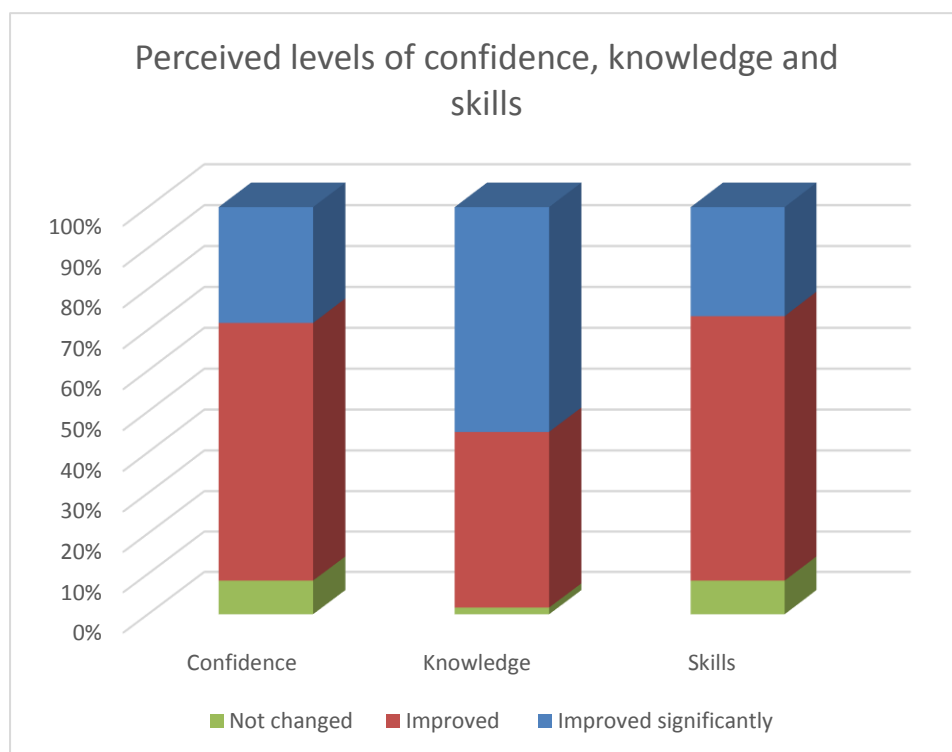
Figure 1



One month after the completion of the training participants were asked to complete a training impact assessment with their manager. Approximately 30% of the participants responded. They were asked to report back on the levels of confidence, knowledge and skills in relation to engaging with eastern European migrant families.

Almost all responded to say that there had been a change in their levels of knowledge, confidence and skills (see figure 2). The one respondent who identified that there was no change identified that they do not work with families and they went on to say that they are applying the skills learnt from the course in their practice: “I currently do not work with any Eastern European families but have been able to apply some of the skills to my work with unaccompanied minors.” The remaining respondents who identified that there was no change in their levels of skills or confidence explained this as being a result of them not currently working with eastern Europeans and thereby not being able to effectively assess any change in these attributes.

Figure 2



The qualitative responses to the impact of the training was very positive from those who are new in post:

“I am new to this position and I found the course very useful.”

“I will take this with me through the rest of my training and hopefully it will inform me when I am working and enable me to have a better understanding.”

To those who have been working with families for some time:

“The course opened my eyes to cultural differences and increased my understanding of the family situations of the Eastern European children and parents with whom I work.”

“Easier now to consider cultural differences when making safeguarding decisions.”

“It has really made me consider the cultural differences between different nationalities and how much I was unaware of the impact of these before.”

“The course has taught me to re-think the way I work with families with different cultures.”

Through to those who are already experienced in working cross-culturally:

“I had a good understanding of the subject; however, the course was a real refresher for me.”

The course was multi-agency and evaluated positively across all agencies with practitioners identifying how the training specifically impacted upon their role:

“I am a family support practitioner and we have families in our area from many different cultures, having an understanding of the way they may think with regards to family values will help me to be more mindful when it comes to safeguarding.”

“As lead nurse for Safeguarding Children this was extremely relevant to my role.”

“In our role as foster cares we are thinking of offering places to refugees, trafficked children and adults Understanding the cultures and religions of any person placed is vital if we are to help them to properly integrate with ours. The course gave us a good insight into this and how to begin to apply the skills needed.”

“I do not work directly with the families and children who visit our hospital, however I have been able to embed some of this knowledge into the training we provide in-house.”

“It is important that cultural competence is embedded in all training that I deliver to staff.”

Some of the participants had previously attended cultural competence training before in their professional career but identified that the training delivered through this project being built upon the evidence collected in the initial stage with a specific focus upon safeguarding children impacted on them in a different and positive way:

“I have been hoping for training like this for years and it is the first time a course I have attended has delivered.”

“Very good training. Should be mandatory to all staff who work with Eastern European communities.”

“It was particularly good to focus on one culture (that of Eastern Europeans). This enabled a more in depth understanding of values, belief systems and how this affects parenting and engagement with services. The more generic the training the more diluted the learning.”

“This should be mandatory so that service provision is equitable.”

“The most useful course I have attended since joining CSC.”

The full training report is available in Annex 3

5. Local conferences

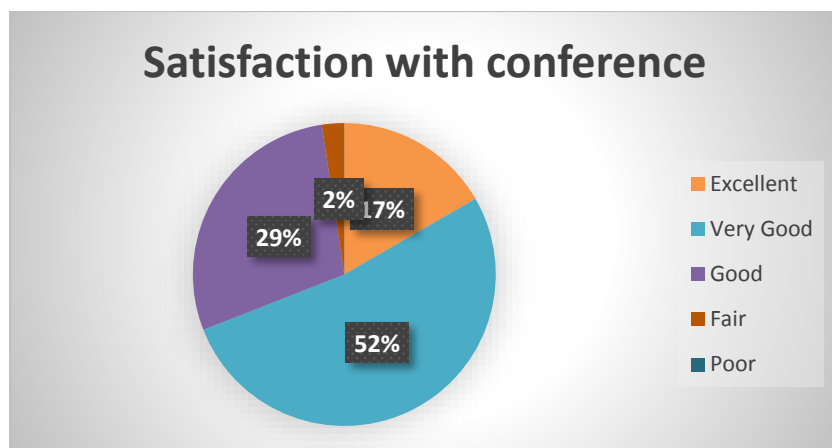
Two half day conferences were held on 9th and 17th March in Thetford and Peterborough respectively. Alongside the findings from the project there were presentation of good practice from local voluntary sector providers, video presentations from service users and presentations from teams who had attended the training and made positive changes to their practice as a direct result of this. These events were aimed at managers and team leaders and were attended by a total of 120 staff.

Participants were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the event and over the two events 72% rated the event as either “Very Good” or “Excellent”

Figure 3 9th March



Figure 4 17th March



Attendees were asked “What was the most useful part of the day?” and all the separate component parts of the programme were identified by different attendees.

Participants were asked what they would take away from the conference and the following are representative of the responses:

- Thinking about key messages for all safeguarding training
- Share info with my team and other services Talk to my team about how we move forward
- Adapt our ethnicity monitoring form
- Look at services we deliver and make them more accessible/understandable for migrants
- Area of development for our LSCB Further thinking for service development strategy
- Review cultural competence in my part of service
- Need to bring this into supervision more and challenge in individual case work
- Need for coordinating existing provision
- Thank you for a very informative and useful conference. Lots to think about and how to go forward to improve our service for families

The project also presented a cultural competence workshop at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Neglect conference in February 2016.

6. Practice guidance

Practice guidance across all three local authorities was reviewed. The All London Practice Guidance for safeguarding children in minority ethnic culture and faith (often socially excluded) communities, groups and families provided the foundation for the local documents. All three authorities are using the same key competencies within their safeguarding procedures and the project has promoted through the learning dissemination process including the conferences and LSCB meetings, and scrutinised them within the training.

7. Conclusions

Cultural awareness and sensitivity

The community engagement process identified that there was a need to improve the workforces' awareness and understanding of the cultural issues relating to eastern European families. The resulting training programme has raised the level of knowledge, confidence and skill within the participants and from the qualitative feedback and from presentations at the local conferences there is evidence that the learning from the training is filtering back into other components of workforce development. Managers identified that they would be utilising the learning from the course to influence supervision:

“using cultural competencies as part of safeguarding supervision”

team meetings:

“raise cultural awareness on a regular basis in team meetings”.

and through in-house training:

“I have been able to embed some of this knowledge into the training we provide in-house.”

“I have been able to take some of this learning back to my organisation to include in our training packages”

There was a train the trainer course to expand the capacity to deliver this course in the future and key learning points from the project are being included in all courses in the LSCB training programmes.

Interpretation and translation

The project identified that the quality of interpretation and translation experienced by service providers and service users is very varied. The need to improve the commissioning of these services was recognised through the learning dissemination process.

Communication with the eastern European community

There is a high level of anxiety and low levels of trust and confidence within eastern European communities about the services that are provided locally. Migrant families are not receiving all the information that they need in order to make informed choices about using services. There is a lack of knowledge within the community regarding UK legislation relating to safeguarding children and this knowledge is being predominantly sourced by word of mouth, which, whilst this can be a highly effective avenue in terms of sharing of information the quality of that information sharing is not assured.

This project has required engagement with the eastern European community and whilst the impact of this consultation process has not been quantitatively measured informal feedback from the community has identified that there is an appreciation that the community is being listened to. Through the production of the videos for the conferences participants expressed a positive belief that their voices were being heard.

Through the work of this project it is anticipated that there will be improved engagement with eastern Europeans by service providers and that this will lead to improved communication. A resource for eastern Europeans is being produced as a result of this project that will communicate key messages (identified by service users) about service provision. The need to communicate more effectively with the community was shared with all partner agencies. Communication with the community will be evaluated through a multi-agency audit later in the year which will include consultation with service users in order to assess progress.

Recording relevant information

In trying to establish datasets to provide baseline data for the project it became clear that the way in which information about individuals is collected within systems does not allow for easy access to this information. This makes analysis of data difficult, incomplete or impossible. In order to improve engagement with eastern European families it is essential to know that whether and to what extent this is happening. This requires robust performance management and good recording of information. Nationality as well as ethnicity should be recorded as a matter of course. It is also important to have the recording of sufficient family history and length of time that they have been living in this country.

This project has focused upon engagement with eastern European migrant families and addressed the cultural competence issues that related to engaging with them. Cultural competence is made up of a number of factors that are reflected in the key competencies that have been established within the practice guidance. The process undertaken to improve engagement with eastern European migrant families is applicable to any other cultural group. Fundamental to this is an understanding of cultural perspectives and that in any interaction, the cultural perspectives of all parties influences the outcomes. The greater the level of knowledge that the practitioner has of the cultural perspectives involved in this interaction, the greater is their capacity to positively influence the outcomes. Understanding of their cultural perspective is the foundation from which professionals can achieve greater cultural competence. Added to this, knowledge about the particular culture and/or faith by which the child and family lives their daily life is essential. Professionals also need to know what services are available locally to provide relevant cultural and faith-related input to prevention, support and rehabilitation services for the child (and their family). Whilst this project has focused upon eastern European cultures, the process of developing competence and the associated skills are applicable to all cultures.

The knowledge and expertise that the Voluntary Sector has in this area of work has been invaluable for the success of this project.

8. Outcomes

Governance and accountability

Through the process of this project Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk LSCBs are better informed of the issues and the arrangements in place to meet the needs of this potentially vulnerable cohort. LSCB partners have a greater understanding of the need to incorporate cultural proficiency into all functions and activity from commissioning through to monitoring and evaluation

The Boards have greater knowledge and capacity to challenge and hold agencies to account and section 11 self-assessments will be a means to both monitor and evidence cultural appreciation and competence within organisations. Training impact assessment as well as ongoing monitoring of access to cultural competence training will also provide evidence of improved cultural competence of agencies. Activity undertaken by LSCB agencies needs to be culturally proficient and business plans and annual reports will provide future evidence to reflect and acknowledge this. All three participating LSCBs are incorporating cultural competence into all their training courses to ensure that this does not appear as a stand-alone subject but acts as a thread throughout all LSCB issues.

Cross boundary working

Collaboration across the three local authority areas has been seen to be beneficial for all parties. This project has been a successful opportunity for the three boards to work together on a specific shared issue and close cooperation in the future will mean that the boards can look for further opportunities for collaboration and synergy in the future. Physical geography has proved a complicated issue for the project but this has not prevented the work from taking place. Communication across all agencies in the three boards has also provided complication which has been exacerbated by the limited time in which the project was required to deliver. Whilst this has proved to be a complication it has not been an impediment to completing the project. Plans to continue the close relationship have been agreed and the three LSCB business managers will be holding regular meetings to monitor the progress of the legacy of the project and to look for further opportunities for collaboration.

Competent workforce and improved services to families

The work done within this project has addressed the cultural competence of individuals and also across teams, organisations and the multiagency practices of

the LSCBs: addressing institutional competence as well as the competence of individuals. All three participating LSCBs are incorporating cultural competence into all their training courses to ensure that this does not appear as a stand-alone subject but acts as a thread throughout all LSCB issues.

The evaluation of the training and the training impact assessment provides evidence of an improvement in the knowledge, confidence and skills of the workforce. A multi-agency audit later in the year will provide further evidence from which to assess the impact of the project.

9. Legacy

Levels of cultural competence have been improved across multi-agency staff teams. Specific cultural competence training will continue and cultural competence has been embedded into all LSCB training. Trainers from all three areas have been trained to deliver the Safeguarding children and cultural competence course. This will be delivered as part of the LSCBs' annual training programmes. A common training hub will be used for this course making the courses available for staff from all three local authorities which will enable continuation of cross boundary networking. Awareness of the importance of cultural competence is being built into all LSCB training courses

LSCB partners will be expected to incorporate cultural proficiency into all functions and activity from commissioning through to monitoring and evaluation. Evidence of cultural appreciation and competence will be assessed using section 11 self-assessments.

Communication with the eastern European communities has been improved as a result of this project and this will be reviewed through the LSCB business managers meetings.

Plans to continue the close collaboration have been agreed and the three LSCB business managers will be holding regular meetings to monitor the progress of the legacy of the project and to look for further opportunities for collaboration.