

PRESS RELEASE

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SECTORS JOIN FORCES TO DELIVER TRAINING ON INTEGRATED OUTCOMES BASED PLANNING TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Representatives from government, policy, integrated planning and academia came together recently (Friday 4 May 2012) at Queen's University Belfast in the first of a series of six training seminars which will be based on each of the six high level outcomes of the Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland.



Pictured l-r are: Ann Godfrey, Children's Services Planning Professional Advisor, Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership; Koulla Yiasouma, Director, Include Youth; Professor Paul Connolly, Chair, Improving Children's Lives; Patricia Carey, Head of Equality and Human Rights Branch, OFMDFM; and Professor Laura Lundy, Professor of Education, Queen's University Belfast.

The purpose of the training programme is to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and practice in Northern Ireland on integrated outcomes based planning for children and young people.

The programme was developed in response to delegate feedback from a conference held last year (Sept 2011) entitled: 'Improving Children's Lives: Outcomes, Partnership and Planning' which indicated the need for greater focus on outcomes based planning in the context of the six high level outcomes of the Ten Year Strategy.

The first seminar focused on the sixth outcome 'Living in a Society which Respects their Rights.' This outcome is central to the outcomes planning framework of the Ten Year Strategy and will lay the foundation for upcoming seminars on the rest of the five outcomes. Each seminar will address how integrated outcomes based planning can be used to progress the outcome.

Paul Connolly, Chair of Improving Children's Lives, outlined the potential of this seminar:

"The Improving Children's Lives initiative at Queen's University Belfast is delighted to have this series of events endorsed by OFMDFM. We feel the ongoing collaboration between the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, Children in Northern Ireland, Health and Social Care Board, Public Health Agency and Improving Children's Lives has significant potential to facilitate real improvements in children's outcomes.

"We hope that this series of six events will build on previous work by ensuring that the key message of using children's outcomes as the focus of planning and designing their services is translated into everyday practice in Northern Ireland and beyond. It is fitting that this first event focuses on children's rights as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the fundamental framework for how we should approach the planning, design and delivery of children's services across the board. In this first event we will hear from leading researchers, policy-

makers and service providers regarding what a rights-based approach to children's services planning looks like in theory and in practice."

These seminars will also complement and support the work already being undertaken by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, through the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan, whose central role is taking forward integrated planning and commissioning to improve the lives of all children and young people in Northern Ireland.

The event is co-hosted by the Improving Children's Lives initiative (ICL), an interdisciplinary network of leading researchers within QUB who work with children and young people; Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI); the Health and Social Care Board (HSC); the Public Health Agency (PHA), Office of First and Deputy First Minister and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.