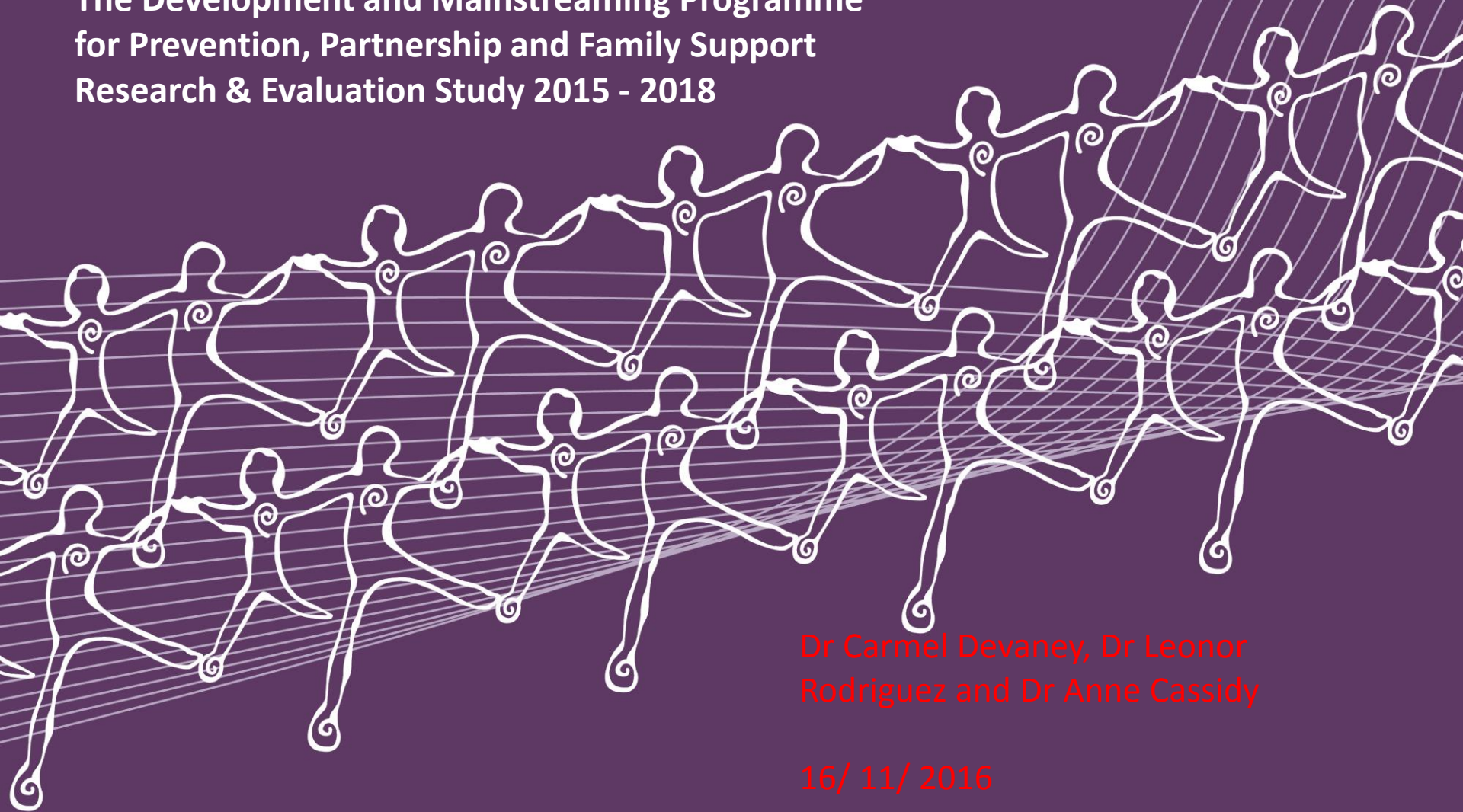
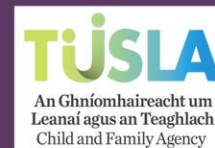


The Development and Mainstreaming Programme for Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Research & Evaluation Study 2015 - 2018



Dr Carmel Devaney, Dr Leonor
Rodriguez and Dr Anne Cassidy

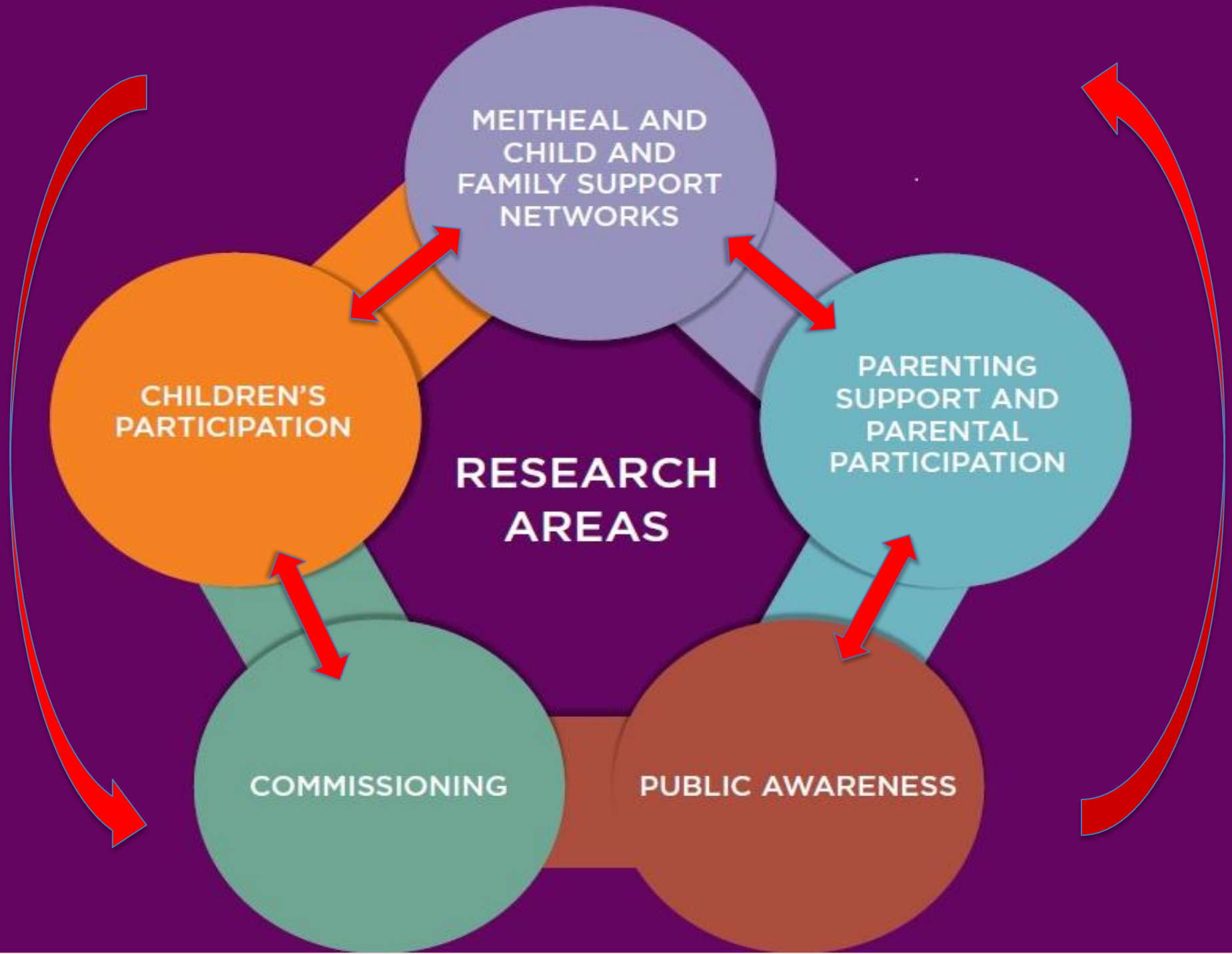
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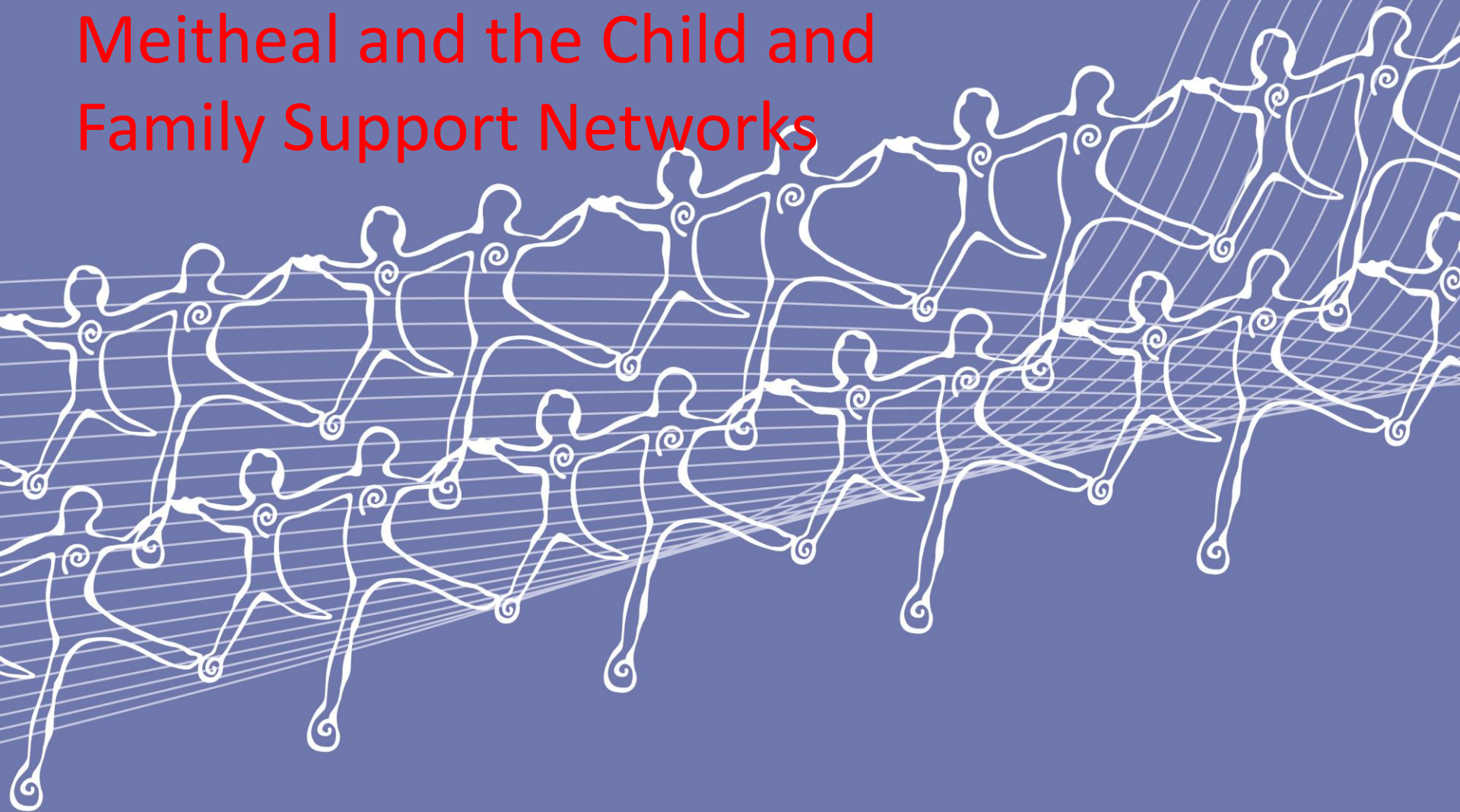
Research and Evaluation Study

Is the organisational culture and practice at Tusla and its partners changing such that services are more integrated, preventative, evidence informed and inclusive of children and parents? If so, is this contributing to improved outcomes for children and their families?



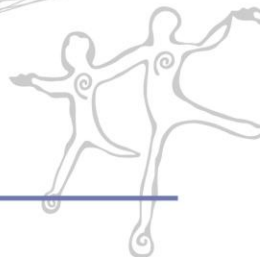


Meitheal and the Child and Family Support Networks



Research and Evaluation: Meitheal and the Child and Family Support Networks

1. *Early Implementation* of Meitheal and the Child and Family Support Networks (*point in time case study*)
2. *Process & Outcomes study* of Meitheal and the Child and Family Support Networks



Aims/Methods of the Study

- The aim of the study was to:
 - evaluate the early implementation of the Meitheal and CFSN model from the perspective of key stakeholders
 - provide feedback to PPFS management on the strengths and challenges encountered to that point

Based on qualitative data collected in four Tusla areas
(*Autumn, 2015*)

- Interviews (face-to-face & telephone) and focus groups with 107 participants
- 56 from Tusla (management and frontline staff) and 51 external stakeholders (community and voluntary, other statutory agencies)



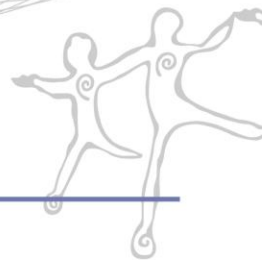
Findings: How are **referral pathways** within Meitheal operating?

- Referral pathways appear to be operating relatively well- reflects the structures and relationships in place
- Concerns around broader engagement with the model and managing relationships and workloads between the statutory and community and voluntary sector



Findings: Are referral pathways within Meitheal operating as intended?

- Beginning to operate as intended
- Concerns about interpretation of thresholds, resource availability and communication
- Significant variation across the areas in focus and stage of implementation
- The Lead Practitioner regarded as vital to the implementation of Meitheal
- Outcomes for families who participated appeared to have improved as a result of the process



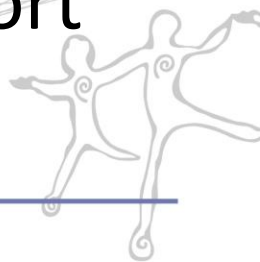
Findings: Are there **unintended consequences** arising from the Meitheal **referral pathway**?

- Significant unintended consequences perceived to have occurred:
 - enhanced relationships between Tusla staff;
 - acting as a catalyst for greater systemic emphasis on early intervention;
 - improved awareness of other sectors' areas of expertise and their resource capacity.



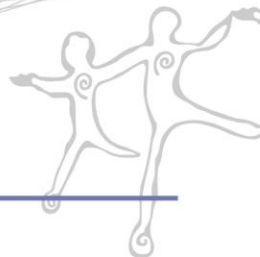
Findings: Are the **relationships** necessary for the operation of the system in place?

- In most areas strong existing informal relationships were in place to support implementation
- In some areas structured relationships were put in place that e.g. help facilitate communication between different partners in the process
- Need to utilise the CFSN structure to support Meitheal implementation



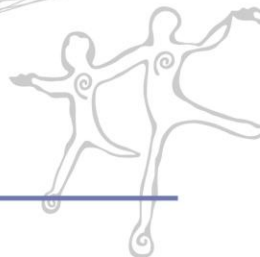
Findings: Are the **key interface** points internally and externally working well?

- The interface between Meitheal and CPW was generally thought to be working well
- Need for further guidance and support around this interface



Findings: Is there evidence of enhanced multi-agency working?

- Strong perception that multi-agency working had increased because of Meitheal
 - Meitheal facilitated a more collaborative style of working
 - Meitheal provided opportunities for networking and building relationships that often continued after a process had concluded



Recommendations

Relationships between Meitheal and the Child Protection and Welfare system

- The Meitheal - CPW interface guidelines should be finalised and disseminated widely
- Careful attention needs to be paid to monitoring the thresholds that Meitheal is expected to operate at
- Need for structured communication and information-sharing pathways between Meitheal and CPW teams



Recommendations

Process of Meitheal and CFSN development

- Continuous awareness raising needed to build greater engagement
- Clearer guidance on the development of CFSNs and their underpinning guiding principles. Incentives to participate could be embedded into the model (e.g. training)
- The CFSN coordinator position needs to be standardised to build on their existing commitment to the role & to increase implementation consistency

Model Fidelity

- Specific emphasis should be placed on a common national approach towards model fidelity
 - Decisions should be taken and adhered to on what are acceptable deviations from the model and what needs to be abided by
-



Process and Outcomes Study



Meitheal and Child and
Family Support Networks



Why is it worth doing?

- Determine the impact of the Meitheal Model on outcomes for children, young people and families
- Consider the impact of Meitheal and CFSNs on the *system* of help seeking / help providing
- First study nationwide focused on prevention and early intervention.
- Exciting, ground breaking research
- Opportunity for continuing professional development



Aims

1. Evaluate the impact of Meitheal on outcomes of children, young people and families
2. Evaluate the process of implementation of the Meitheal Model
3. Evaluate the impact of Meitheal and CFSNs on the *system* of help seeking / help providing

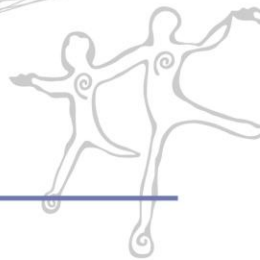


Objectives

- Provide a detailed understanding of the provision of family support through Meitheal nationwide including the perspectives of children, young people, families and practitioners
- Ascertain and describe the impact of Meitheal in the context of the Irish child welfare system.
- Determine the mediating and/or moderating effects of implementation and fidelity on the Meitheal outcomes and process



Methodology



Research Design

- Exploratory study
- Longitudinal
(pre, post, follow up)
- Mixed methods
(quantitative and qualitative methodologies)
- Primary and Secondary Data



Data Collection...

Wave 1

January 2017-February 2018

Wave 2

April –November 2017

Wave 3

June 2017- January 2018

Wave 4

August 2017-February 2018

- New Meitheals ONLY
- Children, Young People, Parents, Families (as case study), Lead Practitioners
- Two months of data collection



Change over time...

*When
Meitheal
is over* or *After 6
months*

Pre
Meitheal

Post
Meitheal

Follow up
@ 12 months



Who is asking?



LEAD

PRACTITIONERS

Quantitative Data

- Scales
- Questionnaires

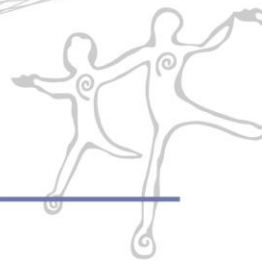


UCFRC

Qualitative Data

- Interviews
- Focus Groups

Secondary Data –
Quantitative



What are we asking families?

PARENTS (X3)

Family Star

GHQ-Malaise

Interview



CASE STUDY FAMILIES (N=10)

All of the above AND

Home Observations
(X3)

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (X3)

Strengths and
Difficulties
Questionnaire

My Star or Youth
Star

Interview-
Participatory
methods

What are we asking practitioners and coordinators?

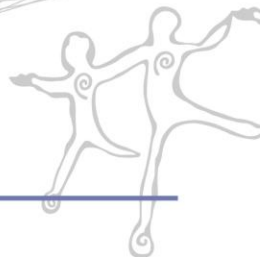
**PRACTITONERS
(X3)**

Fidelity Checklist

Interview/ focus
group

**CASE STUDY
FAMILIES
(N=10)**

Interviews



What are we asking network members?

NETWORKS (X3)

- Interview/ focus groups
 - Meitheal
 - Wider context & systems change



What are we asking Managers?

**Senior, Regional, Area, PPFS
MANAGERS**

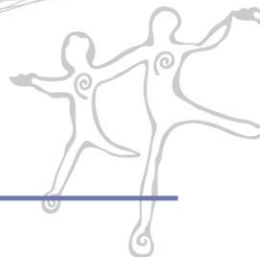
Interview

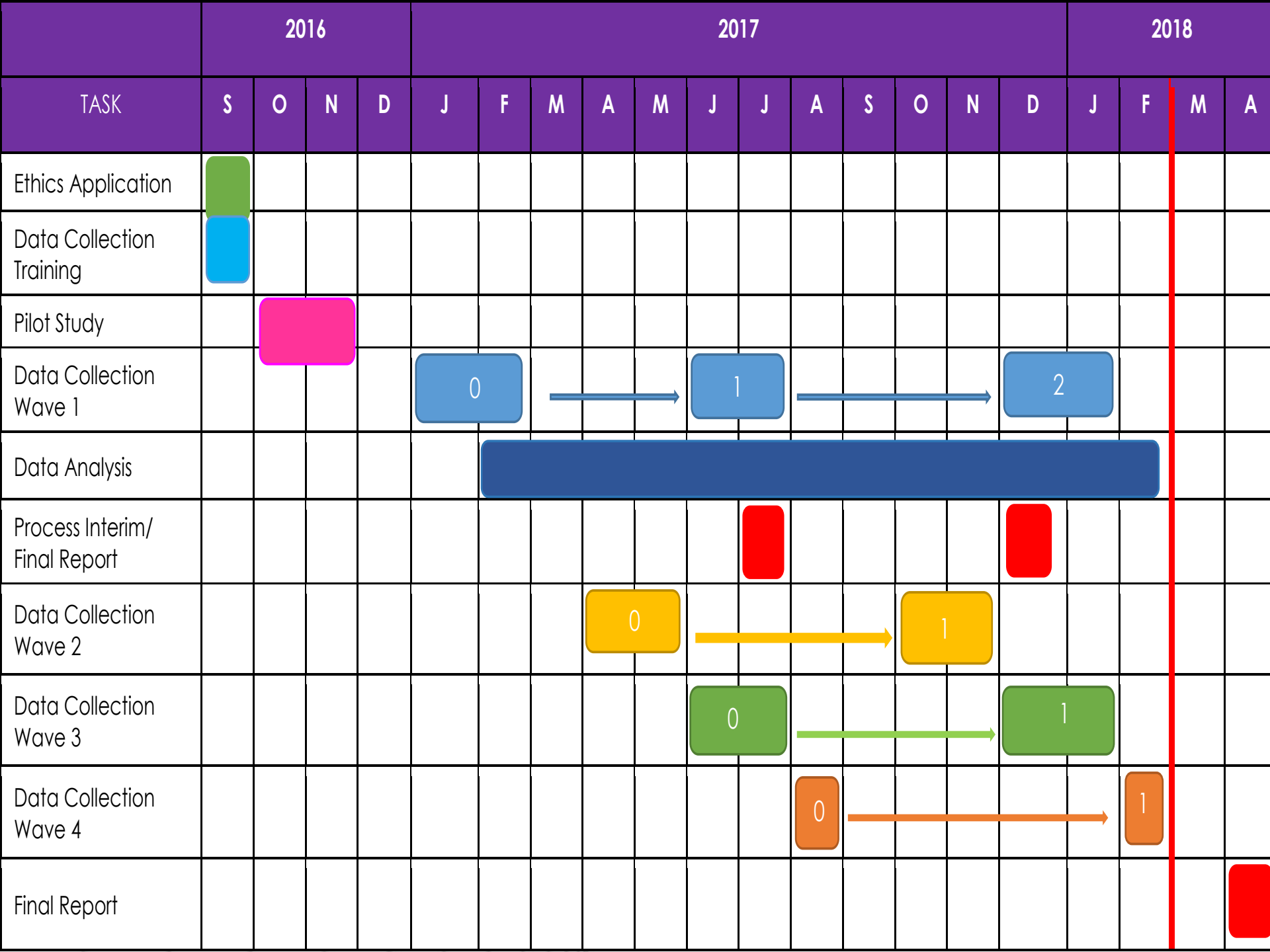
Meitheal & Networks, Wider Context
and system



What do we need from practitioners ?

1. Take part of the training at your local area
2. Find new Meitheal Families
3. Talk to them about the study
4. Complete consent form
5. Collect quantitative data for us
6. Be our contact person for all data collection





Comments & Questions??

