

	Details
Name	Sharon Gorey
Course & Year	MA in Child Youth and Family Studies, 2016.
Title of Research	The Meitheal Model: Will the Discourse Be Compatible with the Actuality
Abstract	<p>The Child and Family Agency, formally established in January 2014, represents the most comprehensive ever reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services in Ireland. The Meitheal Model is one of the strands of the Prevention, Partnership and Family Support pillar which is seen as a major shift as to how services are delivered to parents and children. The Meitheal Model is a national early intervention practise based model which uses a common tool to identify children and young people’s unmet needs at an early stage so outcomes can be improved. It can be used by all agencies working with children and families to identify unmet needs early in the child’s life or early in the course of difficulties.</p> <p>The Study This study offers a local snapshot of practitioner’s perceptions and experiences of using the Meitheal Model with families they are working with. The key research questions were ‘what are the experiences and perceptions of practitioners involved in the Meitheal process in terms of effective implementation, what supports are needed towards effective implementation and what are the barriers that exist towards effective implementation?’ The study sought to identify how practitioners are experiencing the implementation of Meitheal, whether it is functioning and in what context. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was adopted to obtain practitioner’s views.</p> <p>Initial findings suggest a number of interconnecting features which appear to enable or prevent effective implementation despite an overall enthusiasm for the process. Enablers include support from the Child and Family Support Network co-ordinator, on-going training and consultation and perceived outcomes for children and families. Impediments include a lack of organisational support, anxieties about increased workloads and levels of thresholds of need.</p> <p>The research findings demonstrate the potential of the Meitheal model as a key link along the continuum of support provide to children and families. Meitheal will enhance the benefits of interagency working leading to better outcomes for children and families, and is a well-placed model at this time and juncture in children’s services.</p>
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