

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (WALES) MEASURE 2010

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Part 3: Integrated Family Support Teams

Section 57: Establishment of integrated family support teams

118. **Section 57** places a duty on local authorities to establish one or more integrated family support teams (IFST) in their area. It also places duties on the Local Health Board which covers the area to act as a partner to actively assist the local authority in establishing an IFST and actively assist a local authority to discharge its duties with regard to IFST. It enables two or more local authorities to act together to establish one or more IFSTs for both (or all) their areas.

Section 58: Functions of integrated family support teams

119. **Section 58** sets out what an IFST does. The IFST's function is to deal with family cases where the needs of adults in relation to alcohol or drugs, domestic violence, mental health or learning disability are linked to adverse consequences for the children of those adults. The teams will bring together professionals from the local authority and Local Health Board involved to address both adults' and childrens' issues within a single organisation.
120. Under subsection (2) the Welsh Ministers may prescribe in regulations functions of local authorities and Local Health Boards which are relevant to the types of cases which will be dealt with by the teams. These functions are defined in the Measure as "family support functions" and the local authority is to identify the family support functions which are to be carried out by an IFST. This assigning of functions will require the consent of the Local Health Board. The IFST is not a separate legal person; it is a vehicle established by the local authority with the participation of the Local Health Board within which each of those bodies will carry out particular functions collaboratively.
121. Subsection (5) makes clear that referrals to an IFST will come from the local authority.
122. Subsection (6) and (7) set out the types of case which can be referred to an IFST. These are families where a "parent" (as defined) has one of a number of specified difficulties and a child of that parent is either a "child in need" (as defined) or a "looked after child" (as defined). The provisions include a parent of an unborn child and also allow for referral of other individuals connected with the child.
123. Subsection (9) gives a team a specific duty to evaluate and record the effectiveness of its work. Subsection (11) specifies that the carrying out of local authority functions and the carrying out of Local Health Board functions remains the liability of those bodies. Subsection (12) makes clear that any functions assigned to the team are not wholly transferred to it but will continue to be exercised by the local authority or local health board in relation to those who are not, or cannot be referred to an IFST.

Section 59: Resources for integrated family support teams

124. **Section 59** enables a local authority and a Local Health Board to make arrangements to pay for expenditure connected to establishing and running an IFST by paying directly or by contributing to a fund, established and maintained by the local authority. Subsection (2) provides for various practical aspects of funding of IFSTs to be set out in regulations. Subsection (3) covers resources other than cash for example pooling of staff, premises.

Section 60: Composition of integrated family support teams

125. **Section 60** places a duty on a local authority to ensure that IFSTs include the relevant professionals who are prescribed in regulations. Regulations will therefore be able to determine the professional make-up of the teams. Subsection (2) gives a local authority power to include other persons (in addition to those prescribed) in the IFST if they have the consent of the Local Health Board.

Section 61: Establishment of integrated family support boards

126. **Section 61** places a duty on each local authority to establish an Integrated Family Support Board (“IFS Board”) for its area. Section 58(4) requires an IFST to carry out its functions under the direction of its IFS board. The IFS Board must include:
- the director of social services;
 - the statutory lead director of children and young people services (under section 27 of the 2004 Act) if this is not the director of social services;
 - the lead officer for children and young people services from the Local Health Board.
127. Provisions enable local authorities to co-opt other members to the IFS Board with the consent of the Local Health Board and to pay remuneration and allowances to co-opted members appointed under subsection (5).

Section 62: Functions of integrated family support boards

128. **Section 62** expresses as objectives the functions of an IFS Board. Subsection (2) enables the Welsh Ministers through their regulation-making powers to specify functions which would say how an IFS Board must meet the objectives. Within the list of the IFS Board’s objectives, subsection (1)(b) includes the objective for the local authority and Local Health Board to promote good practice, whether by providing training or other means, within their areas that goes wider than the IFST itself.

Section 63: Regulations about integrated family support teams and boards

129. **Section 63** gives the Welsh Ministers power to make regulations about various aspects of the functioning of the IFST and the IFS Board.

Section 64: Annual reports on integrated family support teams

130. **Section 64** places a duty on IFSTs to provide an annual report on their effectiveness. The report must be made available at local level to the local authority, to the Local Health Board and to the Welsh Ministers.

Section 65: Guidance about integrated family support teams

131. **Section 65** requires that a local authority, a Local Health Board, IFST and the IFS Board have regard to any guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers in respect of exercising their powers / functions under Part 3 of the Measure.