NHS Awards 2013 - Story Board Submission

**Category:** Working Seamlessly Across Organisations  
**Organisation:** Aneurin Bevan Health Board  
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1. **Story Board Title**

Watch, Wait and Wonder

(4 words)

2. **Brief Outline of Context**

The client group is parents and infants (0-3 years) experiencing difficulties within the parent/child relationship, living in Monmouthshire.

(16 words)

3. **Brief Outline of Problem**

Professionals (GPs, Health Visitors, Social Workers, and Paediatricians) see families who experience difficulties in providing good enough parenting. Often this is a result of patterns of behaviour which have been learned through many generations. Dysfunctional relationships have a detrimental impact on parenting and thus limiting the child’s potential to achieve on a cognitive, social and emotional level.

(57 words)

4. **Assessment of Problem and Analysis of its Cause**

Most of the families identified with relational / emotional / psychological difficulties were within the Flying Start areas. Some of these families had previously been resistant to other approaches offered by professionals. Often families were unable to make the best use of existing services such as parenting classes because of pre-standing emotional/psychological difficulties.

(53 words)
5. **Strategy for Change**

Watch Wait and Wonder is a play based intervention where infant led play and communication, together with reflective discussion with the therapist and the parent takes place.

The approach aims to ‘break the cycle’ and help families overcome barriers in developing good relationships and thus improve parenting. The evidence base tells us that early intervention is the most beneficial in addressing such difficulties.

Similar models were explored elsewhere in the UK but the Gwent team decided to adapt the approach to include parent/child psychotherapy to compliment the input of the paediatrician and primary mental health worker, who were trained in the approach developed by “Watch, Wait and Wonder”. Families First provided funding to support the pilot which paid for the psychotherapy time plus some admin support and equipment. The expertise of the paediatrician and primary mental health worker were provided by ABHB. The sessions were delivered in Abergavenny and Chepstow in family friendly, non-clinical accommodation provided by non-health partners such Education and Local Authority.

The team made contact with health professionals to invite referrals and supplied leaflets for both the referrer and the families. Presentations were also given to raise awareness of the new service. After referral, families are accepted if it is considered they have the capacity to benefit from the intervention.

(213 words)

6. **Measurement of Improvement**

A decision was made to evaluate the pilot using external researchers and students from the Anna Freud Centre were recruited; this evaluation is still ongoing. Anecdotal evidence and feedback has also been collected from referrers and families.

(37 words)

7. **Effects of Changes**

The initiative was slow to start off but has built momentum as the benefits have become clear and awareness has increased about the service.
The service is able to see six families per session, which is held once per week. A family will typically attend 10 sessions following an assessment. So far the service has helped 17 families since April 2012.

Initial anecdotal evidence of the benefits is demonstrated by the feedback received:

"As a result of the programme David's language skills have developed and communication between us has improved along with his behaviour"

"I feel that I have gained more understanding of my son, his thoughts and feelings, and our relationship has gone from strength to strength"

"I believe that forming a bond with your new baby is very important to their future and when suffering from postnatal depression, that bond is not always formed properly therefore developing behavioural issues. With your guidance through WWW project, my bond with my child has been repaired"

"I feel a good bond is paramount for toddlers and young children before they embark on their school life to ensure that they respond well to instructions and have good communication and social skills"

"A massive thank you for all your help support and understanding! and for helping me to enjoy my little boy the way I should again!"

(227 words)

8. Lessons Learnt

The team have responded to family requests and adjusted the time of session to suit them.

New parents often have chaotic lives and so the team support families attending sessions by sending text reminders.

(34 words)

9. Message to others

Early intervention is the most effective and beneficial.
It is important to embed a good idea in a practical context to make it relevant and to get results.

Find colleagues who are willing to take a risk with you and support each other.

(43 words)

(Total word count for submission 684 words)