



‘Facilitating a sense of home, family, friends, community and belonging in which infants, children and young people feel loved and can flourish’

Families on the edge of care will get the support they need to stay and live together where safe to do so

Scotland's infants, children and young people will be nurtured, loved and cared for in ways that meet their unique needs.

Relationships which are significant to infants, children and young people will be protected and supported to continue unless it is not safe to do so. This recognises the importance of brothers and sisters, parents, extended family and trusted adults.

Care experienced infants, children and young people will thrive in supportive & stable learning and work environments, ensuring they have the same opportunities as others.

Aftercare will be designed around the needs of the person leaving care supporting them to lead a fulfilling life, for as long as they need it.

Infants, children and young people's voices will have a visible and meaningful impact on decision making and care planning

Infants, children's and young people's rights will be part of normal everyday life, practice and decision making.

All adults involved in the care of infants, children and young people are empowered, valued and equipped to deliver the best care system in the world.

Scotland's care services will plan and work better together, sharing information more easily to ensure we understand the what and how of supporting infants, children, young people and their families from a local through to a national level.

Scotland will understand the financial and human cost of care, including what happens when people don't get the help they need

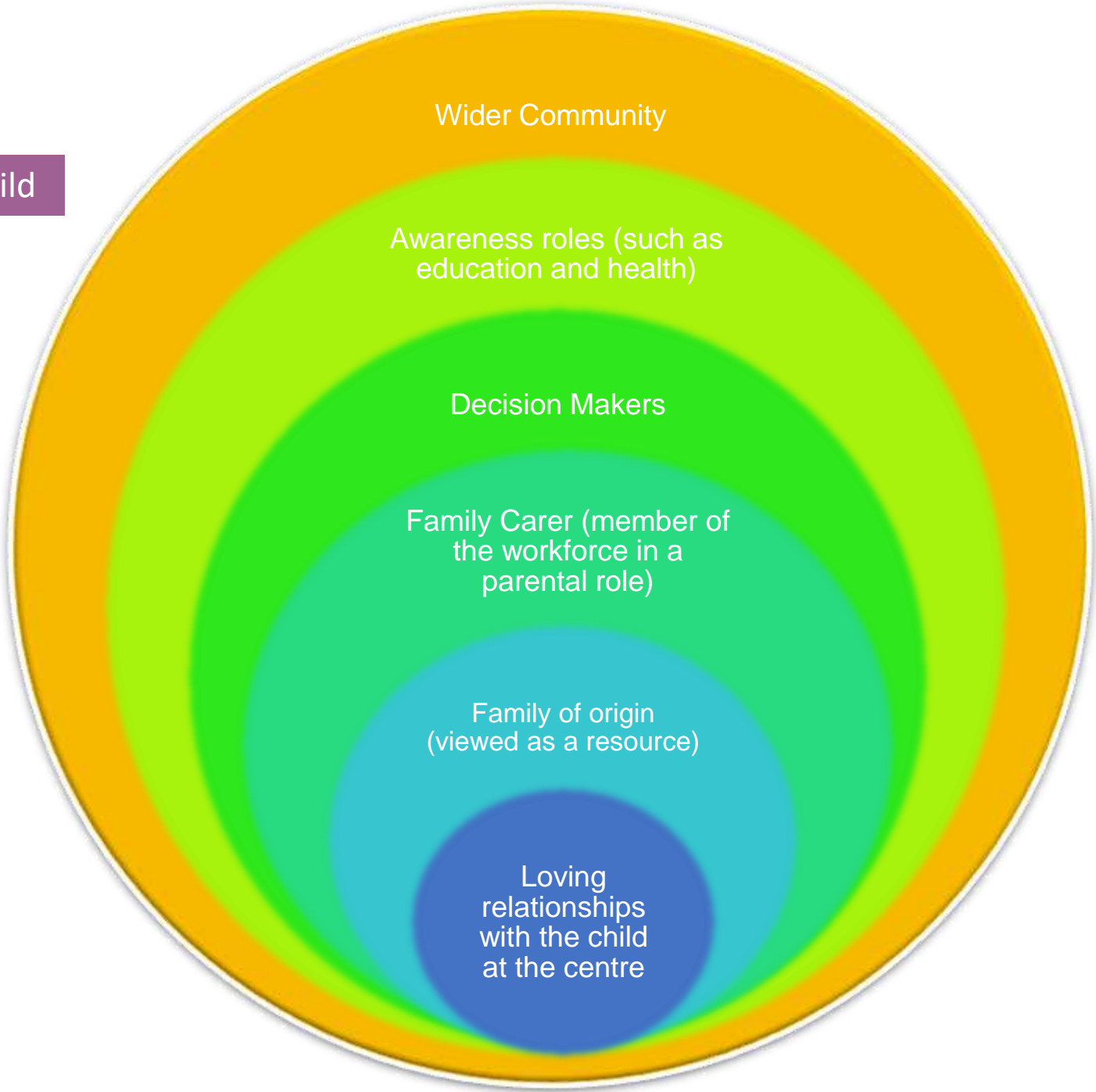
The words used to describe care will be easily understood, positive and not create or compound stigma

There will be no stigma for care experienced infants, children and young people in care because Scotland will understand why our children need care.

We wanted a model which:

- Recognised that the move towards 'family' represented a paradigm shift from 'professional to personal'. This promotes a relationship-focused, holistic, human context in which love is offered and can grow;
- Recognised that some people involved in the lives of infants, children and young people will be 'professionals', but acknowledged that children should never experience something that feels systemic, cold or detached, and that 'professional' needs to be radically redefined to include 'self' and humanity;
- Acknowledged the identity of those with 'care experience' is equal to that of any other type of family;
- Demonstrated no perceived 'hierarchy' of care and was inclusive of everyone who meets infants, children and young people with care experience, recognising that a significant number live with kinship or foster carers in less formal settings;
- Recognised the importance of infants, children and young people who aren't looked after by the state, but who may have experienced neglect or abuse and would also benefit from additional support in/from their communities;
- Identified those in less formal roles who might easily be excluded but often have a lot to offer, such as school caretakers or child minders;
- Recognised that care experience is part of life experience, so that support does not stop at a certain age, but at a stage of readiness, when the young person is ready for it to stop (hence support for adoptive parents for example should be an integral part of arrangements);
- Understood that care relationships needed to be flexible, working towards keeping infants, children and young people at home with their birth family, but also in more acute cases providing a new nurturing family environment; and
- Recognised that everyone in society has a role in caring for all Scotland's infants, children and young people.

Workforce relationships around the child



Values

- The importance of human connection and relationships
- Starting with personal insight and a sense of self
- Professional identity which legitimises human connection

Workforce readiness

Right person right time

Nurturing the workforce

Protective factors

Learning pathway

Creating a sense of home, family, friends, community and belonging

Reducing barriers for Family Carers

Supporting growth and personal identity

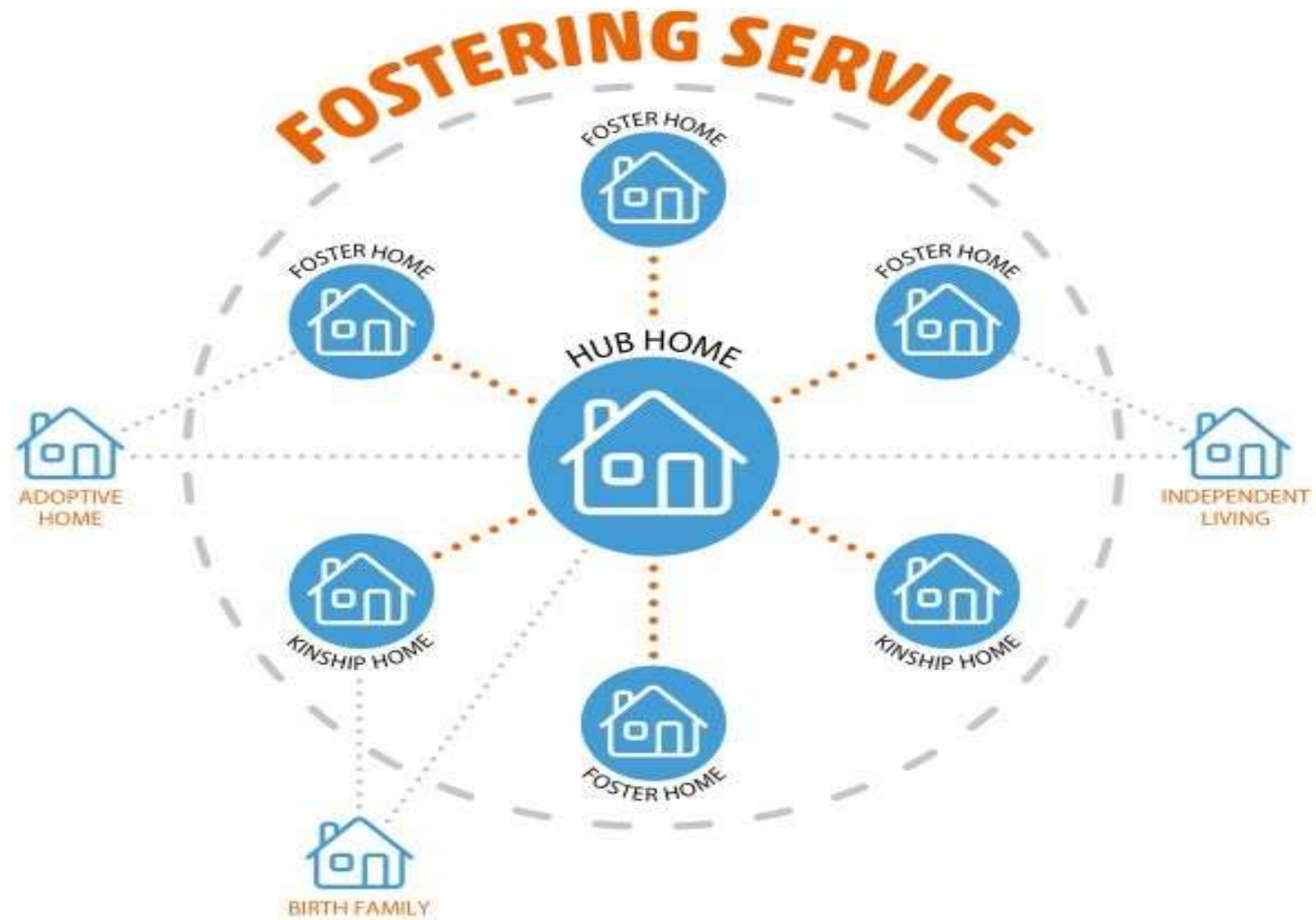
Implementing family care

The role of the workforce

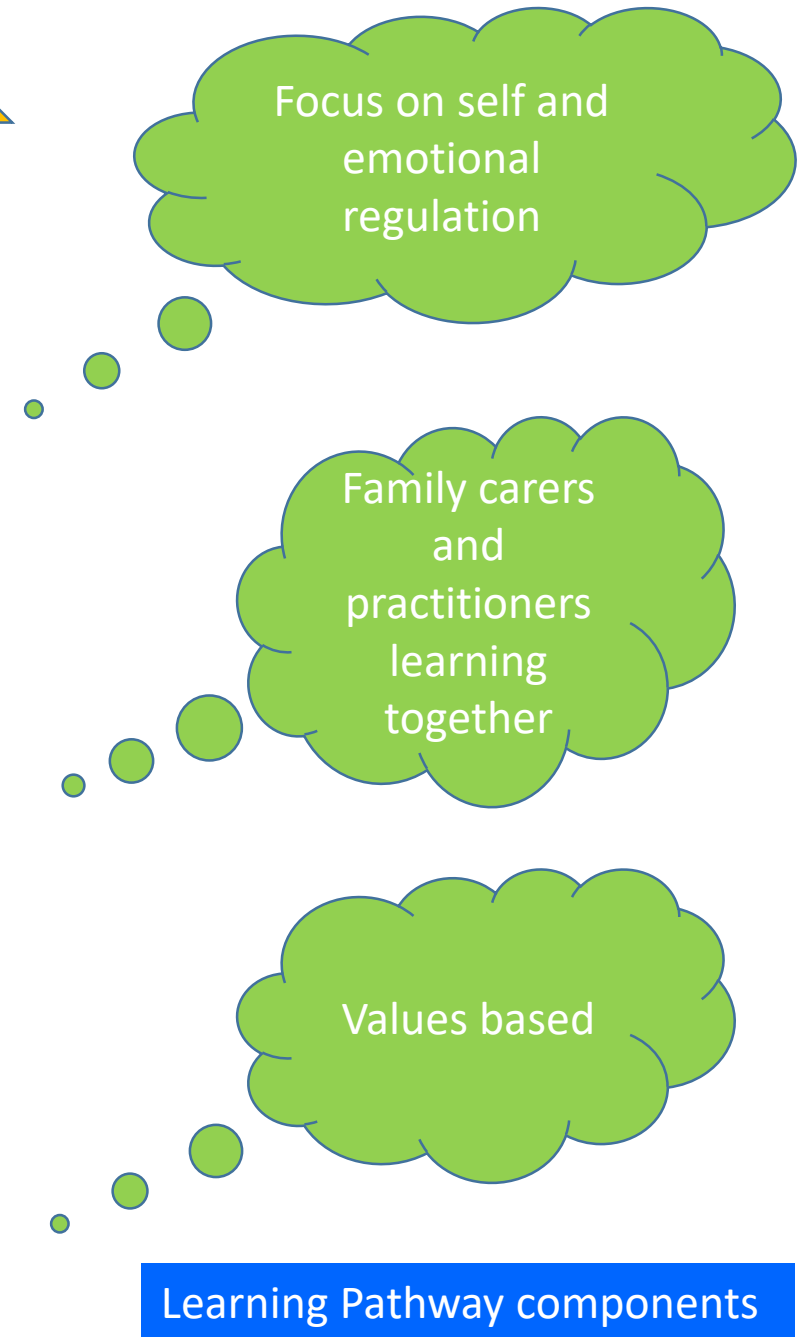
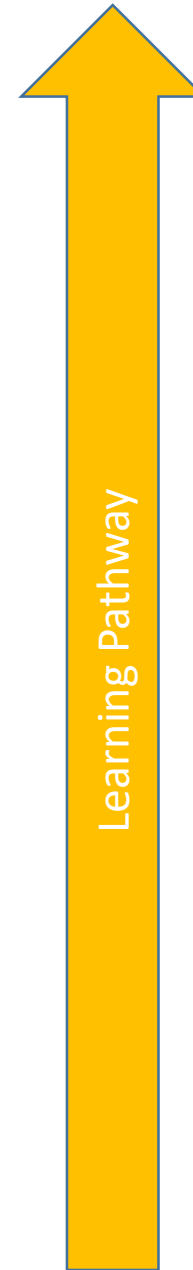
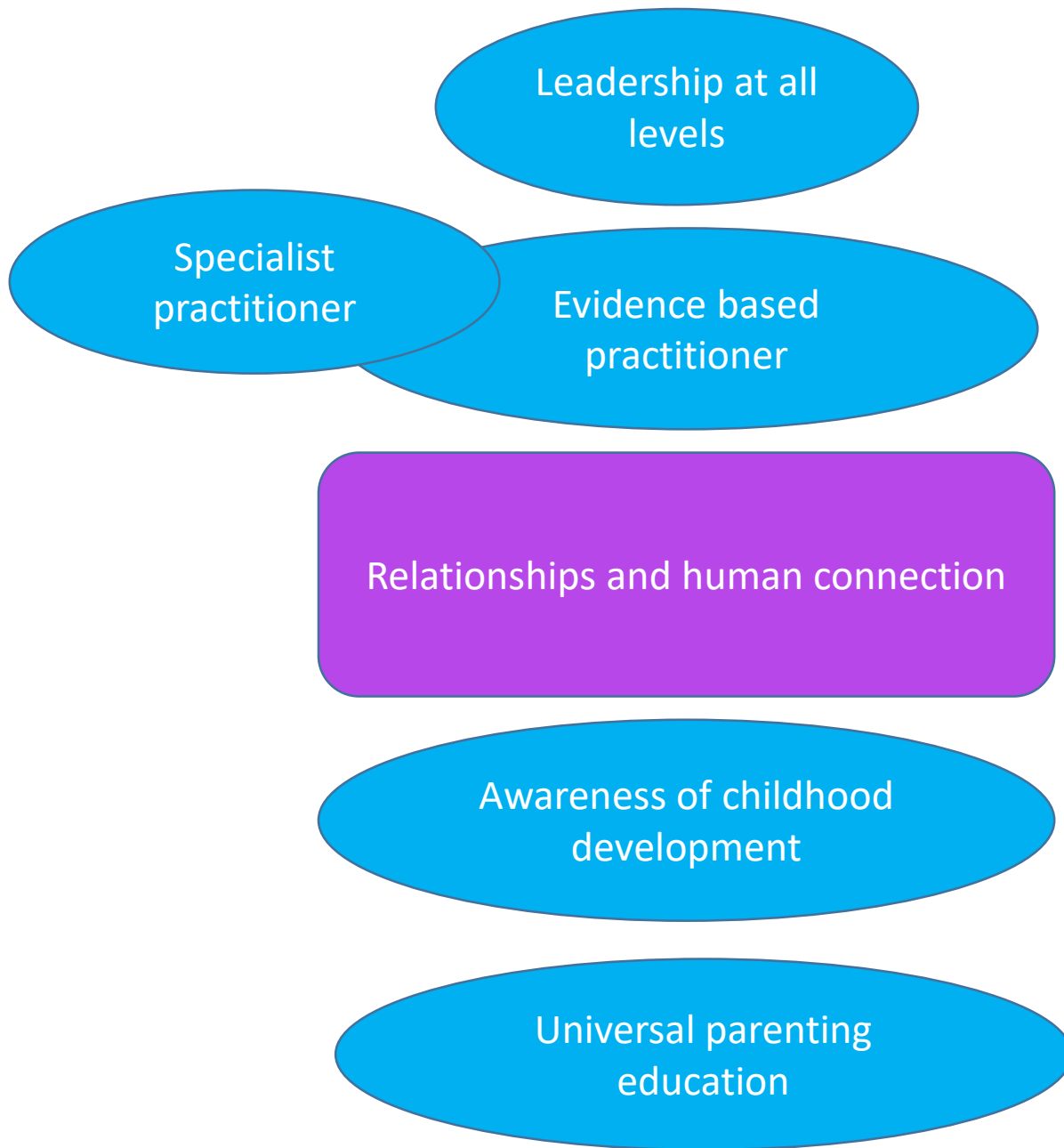
Participation and engagement

Values

Underpinning issues



The Fostering Network's Mockingbird Programme





High level issues relating to the hypothesis

- We all, as members of society, have a responsibility both to understand the needs of children and promote societal understanding of child development, and those relationships which build bonds of secure attachment. We are all likely to have our own children, work in professions that provide services to children, or come into contact with the children of family members and friends.
- *All* families (not only those of children with experience of care) will find parenting challenging at times and should feel encouraged to access good quality parenting education and inclusive support services ahead of time, to be the best parents they can be.
- Parenting and family should be a joyful experience, making and recording happy memories for a positive child's personal narrative, building connections through storytelling and generating hope. We need to create the freedom to have fun, and recognise the importance of play (for children, parents and professionals), in building resilience and relationships.

- Child wellbeing should be embedded as a critical measure of political aspiration and success, with congruent societal values so that individuals recruited to the workforce already recognise the criticality of good parenting and relational child care for the benefit of all. Family and infant mental health, including education about the importance of attachment and the impact of childhood trauma should be viewed as a priority.
- More conversations should take place across the 'workforce' and between all people with responsibility for the care of children, to build shared understanding and language. Birth families, Family Carers and those in other workforce roles have much to gain from each other and should learn (and train) together, wherever possible. Everyone in Scotland has a part to play.
- A Scotland wide universal family support strategy and core service framework should be agreed to keep children in their family and community wherever possible and to ensure geographic consistency of service provision. This should include considering universal changes which directly address the root causes of the 'DNA of the care system', such as universal basic income, whilst not conflating poverty with neglect.

- Services must be designed around the needs of families, infants, children and young people. This means that concepts such as 'out of hours' services and 'hard to reach' individuals are outdated and must be discarded.
- Corporate parenting should mean applying the same standards of care that we would aspire to for our own children. It must free up the 'workforce' to be alongside parents and families, supporting them with essential resources crucial to the care of children including basic material goods and creating the breathing space within which to build relationships. This will require delegation of power and decision making to front line services.
- The social care sector has a particular responsibility to model family friendly employment supports that allow the children of our own employees to flourish. Wider society should also explore innovative solutions to support parenting and the quality of family life through employment routes.
- A significantly greater effort is required to ensure the meaningful participation of people with lived experience in their own life journey and to inform relational policy and practice. Shared values underpinned by lived experience must directly and consistently inform continuous quality improvement with a rich qualitative as well as quantitative evidence base. The progress made by the Independent Care Review should be seen as a beginning rather than an end.