



## What have we learned so far? The CHANGE Hub

This learning summary highlights some of the key learning from a recent evaluation report of the CHANGE: Childcare & Nurture Glasgow East project by Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd for the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. It will focus on Chapter 4 of the report which is all about the CHANGE Hub.

Key points are:

### Development of the CHANGE Hub

Year 1 of the CHANGE project saw the project team carry out significant engagement, networking and relationship building in the project area. Building on this in year 2, creating a community hub that brought local partners with a common purpose together, became the clear next step.

The aim of this hub would be to facilitate a space for organisations who work with local families to come together and share ideas, concerns, good practice and test new innovative ideas in relation to childcare. The CHANGE Hub would lead change at a local level, ultimately reducing barriers to accessing childcare.

From its inception in 2018 the CHANGE Hub has grown and developed. The first meeting was attended by 10 individuals representing 7 organisations. This has grown to 37 members who represent 26 organisations at the time of writing. This growth is thanks to continual engagement and communication approach that has evolved to best meet the needs of Hub members. This adaptive approach has helped increase buy-in from local partners by refining the offer of participation to best meet member's needs.

For example, a number of CHANGE Hub members have extremely busy working days and their time for any additional activity is very limited. In order to optimise the time that members engaged with the CHANGE Hub, individual working groups were created. This arrangement meant that

members could meet separately to discuss areas of interest and feed key outcomes to the overall group.

*“Initially the offer was quite broad which was not enticing enough for people so by making it specifically targeted, the buy-in improved significantly and we have consistent attendance...”*

Local stakeholder

This development offered a more tangible and realistic opportunity for partners to participate and meant that members could maximise the time they had available to engage in the CHANGE Hub.

## **Strengths of the CHANGE Hub**

One of the most important outcomes of the CHANGE Hub has been enabling effective informal working relationships between a wide variety of local organisations. As well as being community ambassadors, members represent a range of organisations from local childcare providers, the third sector, education, Health Improvement (on behalf of the Health & Social Care Partnership), Thriving Places (a Glasgow Community Planning Partnership initiative) and the Department for Work and Pensions. Effective local partnerships are vital to achieving the CHANGE Hub's aims; to provide holistic support to families and improve the local childcare offer, both in terms of provision and accessibility.

*“The Hub has brought together partners into the same space who previously wouldn't have worked together and helped to break down those barriers.”*

Local stakeholder

Transparency has also been a strength of the CHANGE Hub. It was recognised from the outset that being visible to the local community and not viewed as a 'secret society' with hidden objectives would help garner trust and participation locally.

*“The Hub has to operate visibly and in real-time... people are wary of short-term projects which could have impeded engagement so being visible was key... There are no hidden agendas. We are all singing from the same hymn sheet and want to work together.”*

Local stakeholder

## Areas of development

There are two key areas identified by CHANGE Hub members that the group are developing:

### Emergency childcare

During the community engagement phase of the project a recurring issue was highlighted by families and professionals; the need for a supportive service which could provide emergency childcare, during stressful or difficult time. Often families in the project area need to attend emergency appointments, sometimes at short notice, and require a safe childcare option they can access, with qualified professionals.

Parents and carers report that they often need to bring their children along with them to healthcare appointments, as an alternative option is unavailable. This means they are unable to fully disclose their feelings or symptoms during their appointment due to the sensitivity of the discussion or because their child needs their attention, making assessing the support and care they need difficult. The hub members have been involved in scoping and testing how a service such as this could become a reality.

### Food Access and Information

A key area of focus for the CHANGE Hub has been increasing families' access to affordable healthy food locally. This stream of work has led to the development of Plot to Plate, a club for local families that offers the opportunity to build relationships through growing, cooking and eating together.

The Hub has supported the development and delivery of this community growing and nutrition programme which has so far engaged with 18 parent/carers in the Tollcross/Shettleston/Parkhead/Dalmarnock area.

The progress of this work is underpinned by regular data collection and 'tests of change'. From the outset, the CHANGE Hub has adopted an improvement methodology approach supported by the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC). To help evidence impact and put the improvement methodology into practice Lee Urquhart, a Scottish Government Improvement Adviser, represents CYPIC at the CHANGE Hub, offering guidance on setting up tests and how best to measure impact.

The CHANGE Hub also plays an important role in supporting other aspects of the CHANGE project work. For example:

## Childminding

There are a very low number of Childminders in the CHANGE area, so the CHANGE project has been working with partners at the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and Clyde Gateway to raise awareness of Childminding and encourage and support more people to consider it as a career. The CHANGE Hub has played an important advisory role in this as well as helping reach local families for whom we wish to create more flexible childcare options locally.

## Out of School Care (OSC)

Following analysis of demand and availability, a gap in registered OSC spaces was identified in the project area. This is particularly evident in Parkhead area, where the CHANGE project is working alongside local partners to try and secure a new OSC service. The partnerships built at the CHANGE Hub have been helpful during the scoping process and the wide range of partners present has helped to identify and explore new avenues of opportunity.

## Legacy of the CHANGE Hub

The CHANGE Hub has offered a space for local providers from a variety of organisations to create strong partnerships and facilitate and test new collaborations that offer family support and improve childcare provision locally.

*"It comes across that they want to make a long-lasting difference, also that they recognise they'll not be there forever... they are trying to facilitate effective partnerships."*

Local stakeholder

It is hoped by all involved that the effective partnerships that have been forged in the CHANGE Hub continue to grow and strengthen beyond the funding period for the CHANGE project. The CHANGE team are working with the Hub members to consider how to ensure the long-term sustainability of the collaborative approach that has been developed moving forward.

## Sources

The information in this learning summary was drawn from the following sources:

**CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three.** An evaluation of the CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East project, prepared by Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd for Glasgow Centre for Population Health in February 2020.

**CHANGE Scoping paper.** This paper outlines the need for a supportive service which could provide childcare, during stressful or difficult time. Often families in the project area need to attend emergency appointments, sometimes at short notice, and require a safe childcare option they can access, with qualified professionals.

**Evidence Report Plot to Plate.** Summary of work carried out to date at St Paul's Primary School and TICTACS Out of School Care.