contact a family
for families with disabled children

Strengthening Parent Carer Participation
Developing your region

- Welcome to this Contact a Family Webinar
- If there is a technical hitch, please do bear with us
- Those of you joining by pc, laptop, tablet or smart phone should now be able to see this introduction slide
Timing & Questions

- As there are so many attendees, it is not practical for verbal questions to be taken, therefore you will all remain ‘muted’ throughout.

- If at any point you have questions, please use the question icon on your GoToWebinar tool bar on your screen.
  - This will allow you to type your question in to the text box and submit this to the Webinar administrator.
  - I will select as many relevant questions to answer as time allows, if similar questions are received I will condense these where possible.
Q&A Session

- Further relevant questions, not covered in the time allowed, will be answered and posted on the Contact a Family website along with the recording of this Webinar, details of which will be circulated next week.

- At the end of the Webinar a short questionnaire will launch, please take the time to complete this as this will assist with future online training events.
Developing your region

Why the regions are important and how to develop them

Mrunal Sisodia (NNPCF)
Kulwinder Bola (Chair East of England)
Overview

- Why are the regions important? - Mrunal
- What do you want your region to do? - Mrunal
  - What are your priorities?
  - What areas of work could you get involved in?
- How do you set the region up? - Kulwinder
  - Decision making
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Money
- Lessons learnt - Kulwinder
- Questions
Why are the regions important?
The gap between law and its application

- Department of Health
- Ofsted
- Department for Education
- SEND Regional Peer Network
- NHS
- The regions

Regional commissioning

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
NHS
Bedford Borough Parent/Carer Forum

NNPCF
National Network of Parent Carer Forums
‘Our Strength is our Shared Experience’
Communication

It can sometimes be a long way from the Palace of Westminster to your front room.

The success of the NNPCF relies upon understanding the everyday experience of families living with SEND.

Equally well, the success of local forums depend upon knowing, first hand, what is happening at a national level.

Communication is a key part of the role of the NNPCF rep. The regions are vital to this communication.
They’re all our children - peer support

The more we support each other, the more we support our children.
Succession planning - “leaders are made not born”

Working at a regional level gives us all the opportunity to grow and learn.

We can apply what we learn in our own forums and at a national level.
What do you want your region to do?
There are lots of things that your region can do...

...you need to agree what your priorities are.
Regional networks are critical at a national level

- The NNPCF relies on regional networks to “distil” intelligence for use at a national level
  - We can’t talk to 80,000+ members directly
  - Key themes and priorities emerge at a regional level
Examples of activity at a regional level

Peer network
- Termly peer network meetings
- Peer network governance group
- Monthly peer network telekit

NHS
- Transforming care
- Strategic Clinic Network (the remains of this)
- SEND regional leads
- Sustainability and transformation plans

NNPCF
- Regional meetings
- Regional training / events

Other
- EHCP peer reviews
- Local offer peer reviews
- Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS)
- Association of Directors of Adult Services (ADAS)
- Regional SENCO meetings
How do you set your region up?
The building blocks of what we do

- Governance
- People
- Money
- Values
Governance (light touch)

Decision making
Termly meeting of our representatives group comprising of members from each of our 11 member forums.

Policies
Roles and Responsibilities
Code of Conduct
Representative agreement
Feedback forms
Payment policy
Expenses policy

(Examples of these are available)
People

- Chair
- Vice-chair (who deputises for the chair and co-ordinates all regional representatives)
- Secretary
- Money handled by Hertfordshire & their treasurer
- NNPCF regional steering group member
- CAF regional adviser
People - Chair and Vice-chair

- Two year cycle for Chair
- Two year vice Chair - move into Chair’s Role
- Vice chair helps with administration as a good way of learning the ropes
- Nominated and Elected by the 11 forums

- Some regions have found that having a rotating chair works for them:
  - ensures all Forums in the region have key role to play
  - helps to share the workload and supports succession planning
  - Enables and develops strong leadership skills, which are useful locally in ones own forum
People - Secretary

- Keeping minutes of ERPCF meetings.
- Keeping action point lists from meetings and review at meetings
- Maintaining forum policies and procedures
- Oversight of compliance with forum’s policies and procedures
- Maintaining regional forum contact lists
- Distribution of documents to members of Regional Contact List

Excellent administration is essential to the smooth running of the region - don’t under-estimate the importance of this role!
People - Treasurer

- Maintaining accounting records
- Monitoring the bank account
- Making payments from the bank accounts in accordance with our payment policy
- Invoices each forum for annual regional contribution
- Reconciling bank statements to accounting records
- Preparing financial reports for each ERPCF meeting
- Helping with CAF / DfE monitoring forms
People - NNPCF regional steering group representative

- Understanding the experiences of families with SEND in the region
  - Attend regional and local meetings
  - Social media
  - Surveys & reports
  - Listen to people!
- Representing these experiences at the NNPCF to formulate policy and positions
- Representing these policies and positions to decision makers at a regional and national level.
- Communicating activity at a national level to the region
People - CAF regional adviser role

- Supporting the effective working of forums at a local and regional level
- Understanding the support that forums in the region need from CAF and helping forums access that support
  - Overseeing the DfE grant programme in the region
  - Supporting forums with effective use of the grant
  - Supporting the development of regional networks
  - Advice and guidance on all aspects of running a forum and participation
- Helping forums facing significant challenges with more intensive support
Money - regional discretionary grant

- This year there is no central regional funding pot through CAF.
- Instead regions can apply for a discretionary grant. This grant is available now.
- Some things to think about when making this grant application are:
  - Ideally, the grant application should be signed by the regional chair and the chair of the group holding the money
  - The discretionary grant can be used to cover the costs of running the regional network - venues, refreshments, expenses and any agreed remuneration
  - You can use the money to hold a regional conference - the North East Region held a very successful regional conference
  - You can use the money for regional training or speaker days - for example for more specialised or expensive training that may not be practical for an individual forum to hold
  - Some regions have a regional social media page and a social media co-ordinator
Money - where does it come from in the East of England?

- Contribution from each member forum
- Discretionary grant from DfE via Contact a Family
- Funding from peer network to enable local forum reps to attend peer network events

Other sources?
Money - how we manage our money in the East of England

- Hertfordshire parent carer forum holds and administers our funds for us. This means:
  - We use HPCI’s bank account - *is there a forum in your region willing and able to do this?*
  - The East of England Regional chair and the Hertfordshire chair sign of our CAF / DfE grant application - *you should do the same.*
  - We work under the umbrella of the financial control policy of our host forum - we have added some additional processes to cover regional work (notably separate sign off on regional work by the regional chair) - *you will need to differentiate between what is local expenditure for the host forum and regional expenditure and control both separately.*
  - We discuss and agree our regional budget at regional meetings including the individual contribution from each forum - *your region should own its priorities, workplan and the resulting budget*
Values - they’re all our children

Complementary not competitive

Positive and enthusiastic

Solution focussed

Supportive and nurturing

Celebrate differences and diversity
Lessons learnt
Challenges

- **Governance**
  - Sometimes hard chasing individual forums to do what we’ve agreed (e.g. paying regional contributions)
  - Ensuring our policies are workable and getting forum buy in
  - Not all forums pay for people’s time - you will need to find an approach that all the forums in your region are comfortable with

- **People**
  - Ensuring we have enough Reps to cover all the work streams (local problem on a regional scale)
  - Training and support of regional reps
  - Stepping up to work at a regional level can be a challenge
  - Regional reps need to be clear what “hat” they are wearing at which meetings - are they representing the region or their local forum?
Challenges

- **Money**
  - Ensuring we have enough funds to meet our group’s aspirations
  - Delays in getting grant funding until June mean that we have to carry forward funds from other sources to operate for the first 3 months of the year
  - Delays in getting regional expenses for payment and differentiating between local and regional work

- **Culture**
  - Ensuring we have a clear unanimous voice even when our local priorities may be different to that of the regions - Greater Good approach can be hard.
Successes

- One united voice is hard to ignore, and very often results in funds to support our work.
- Greater Good approach also means that no one forum is left behind.
  - E.g. mature approach to individual forum contributions and transparency about who has paid.
- Peer to peer support is invaluable - any PCF from within the region can pose a question and all will do their best to respond.
- Camaraderie - and having ‘a can do mentality’ enable barriers to be overcome.
- Respect and confidence in those you elect to lead the region.
- Strong regional secretary and book-keeper means we stay on top of the admin and don’t get bogged down in “noise”.
Questions?
Thank You

- Thank you for attending with us today
- A short questionnaire will launch at the end of this webinar
- Please take the time to complete this it will help us plan future online training events including other topics you would like to see
- The recording of this Webinar, presentation and questions will be on the parent participation Resources page of Contact a Family’s website next week - an email confirming this will be sent to you once this is available