

# Think Family Symposium

18<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Regional Think Family Social Work Assessment  
Pilot March 2017-2018

An Overview

Kerry McVeigh (Acting Principal Social Worker BHSCT)  
Corey McCann (Mental Health Social Worker NHSCT)

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- HSCB investment in developing family focused practice
- The Pilot has developed in partnership with NI Social Work Strategy (2012–2022) using ‘The Family Model’ (Falkov 2012) as the framework for the assessments
- The purpose of the pilot is to highlight the contribution SW makes within care and treatment planning for families within Adult Mental health Services, and the benefits this brings to parent and family recovery
- 11 Social workers participating in the Pilot (across NI)
- 23 families involved (across NI)
- Interview with children, parent, carer, then as a family.

# TFSWA Content

- Referral Details
- Presenting Issues
- Family Composition (including genogram)
- Personal History
- Social circumstances
- Current Services
- Analysis/Synthesis
- Recommendations

# Regional Overview

- Families were mostly known to Adult Mental Health only.
- - Main age group of children were 0-15years.
- - Main reason for referral was due to parental/sibling mental health.
- - Main impact was on children

## **Better off?**

- 34% advised they had better understanding of the impact of their illness on child and family.
- 69% improvement in the relationship between parent and children and 59% improvement between parent and carer due to the family conversation
- Majority of service users (21) felt FFP had benefited their family
- 15 service users felt FFP had improved understanding of culture and community.
- MDT feedback very positive in promoting family conversations and understanding between family members regarding MI.

# Benefits of TFSWA

- 'Family Conversation' - encourages communication, permission to ask questions, identify concerns, strengths based
- Focus on parental interactions with children, impact of parental mental ill health on relationships, child resilience and coping strategies.
- Systemic assessment, identification of life events across the life span and how they relate to current PMI, environmental factors.
- Learning that children are much more aware of parental mental illness and presentation than previously thought by parents.
- Learning that children need to be provided with timely, age appropriate information in order to feel secure, reassured and to understand that it is not their fault.
- Increase understanding of the value of social work assessment and the benefit of family support planning as opposed to focus solely on the service user
- Flexibility – TFM/TFSWA can be adapted to families needs.
- MDT accessible
- Partnership approach, personal centred, co-produced support plans.