

Q3 WHAT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES ARE NEEDED TO SUPPORT SET UP?

Most new areas have moved quickly to establish a steering group, followed at a later date by an operational group.

STEERING GROUP (SG)

Having a Steering Group is a good way of marking your intention to explore the FDAC option seriously and an essential part of successfully embedding FDAC in your area. The initial, informal purpose can be to provide a structure for the exploratory work: a place and time to meet, and a chair who will liaise with interested people, set agendas for discussion and circulate and follow up agreed actions.

Further down the line in your planning, the purpose of the SG will be to:

- provide general oversight of the service and of its strategic direction
- develop and approve the service specification
- oversee the commissioning and appointment of the specialist team and of the staff who will manage the service, and
- identify the locations where the specialist court and team will be based.

Members of the SG will be drawn from the key agencies integral to the success of FDAC. They are likely to include:

- senior local authority managers (social care and legal)
- judges and court manager
- public health and substance misuse commissioners
- a representative from the local CCG/s
- local Cafcass manager
- the manager of the specialist team (if an existing team will be used for FDAC).

Once the FDAC is up and running the role of the SG will be to monitor the service and activity against baseline data, and the impact of the service on family members and professional practice. The SG will also have responsibility for determining and ensuring long-term viability of the service.

Regularity of meetings: The Group might need to meet at least once a month in the early planning stages, moving to every 2 months once the detailed project planning is underway, and then quarterly once the service opens.

OPERATIONAL GROUP (OG)

This will be a sub-group of the Steering Group. Its main role will be the early identification and problem solving of practical difficulties encountered by the new service, and the development of processes for the smooth running of a multi-disciplinary service with a broad range of partners.

Membership should be drawn from operational staff in the relevant partner agencies including:

- social work managers
- Local authority and private practice lawyers
- Court staff
- children's guardians working with FDAC
- adult treatment services manager
- housing representative
- other relevant service providers such as peer mentoring services and therapeutic groups the FDAC service is/will work in collaboration with.

Regularity of meetings: It is likely to meet monthly during the set-up stage and then every 6 to 8 weeks once the service opens. Regular reporting to the Steering Group will provide the SG with the information it needs to give the service strategic direction.

Project Manager

Once you have key players on board and a shared intention to progress towards setting up an FDAC, having a project manager in place to carry out or coordinate the tasks set out in sections 4 and 5 below can be very helpful. This will be a time-limited post and can be part-time. The project manager can help ensure that actions from Steering Group meetings are followed through. They can also speed up the process of establishing whether there is a need for FDAC, developing the business case for investing in FDAC, and identifying ways of commissioning the service. For contact details of experienced FDAC Project Managers click [here](#).

Resources: These project managers/FDAC advocates will be able to provide access to the resources created by the FDAC National Unit for sites setting up available in the members section of the website. Resources include: template Terms of Reference, Service Specification, etc. Most resources you will need have already been developed for an existing FDAC. These are available to be adapted, there is no need to reinvent the wheel.