

DML Excellence Awards 2016 Report

Project No: 18 – Pre School Childrens Sleep Clinic (Kildare/West Wicklow)

Address: Kilcock Health Centre, Kilcock, Co. Kildare.

Location: CHO 7

Brief Description (up to 200 words)

The Preschool Children's Sleep Clinic is a service provided to parents/guardians of children with sleep difficulties. The clinic is provided by Sinead Lawlor Public Health Nurse/Sleep Practitioner. Preschool children from all areas of Kildare/West Wicklow are referred. Referrals are received from health care professionals in the primary care setting eg Public Health Nurses, GP'S, Dieticians, Physios and also from the Early Intervention Teams Teams/Network Disability Teams who provide services for children with disabilities.

Referrals are in consultation with the parent/guardian who has identified that the child has sleep difficulties. The clinic works with the parents to identify the sleep problem for example sleep onset association disorder and then develop an intervention plan for specific for the child and the parent, taking into account the sleep problem, the parenting style of the parents and the developmental stage of the child. Follow up appointments are provided at the sleep clinic. On average there are 2-4 visits to the clinic by which time the sleep problem has resolved.

Main goal(s) and aims of the Project

The main goal of the Preschool Children's Sleep Clinic is to provide a service to parents/guardians of children with sleep difficulties whereby the sleep problem is identified and a solution focused intervention is designed for the family to implement. The aim of the service is to reduce the severity and prevalence of behavioural sleep problems in the preschool population. Sleep disturbance/problems in preschool children are associated with delayed development, reduced cognitive ability, behavioural difficulties, obesity and many other issues.

Outline of Approach – main steps taken to implement the Project

The Pre School childrens sleep clinic was developed following local research carried out by the Public Health Nurse. The research identified the prevalence and severity of sleep problems in a sample of preschool children in Kildare/West Wicklow. Of the children sampled 40% reported either difficulties with getting to sleep or staying asleep. Education to parents is provided through regular information talks that take place at Mother and Bay/Toddler groups/parents Groups/local Libraries throughout the county. Training has been provided to help Public Health Nurses (Kildare/West Wicklow) to identify behavioural sleep problems and the common causes. Referral pathways and guidelines for the service were drawn up with the assistance of the Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing. Guidance was also provided by Denise Gillespie ANP in Donegal who provides a childrens behavioural support clinic to preschool children. The project commenced in October 2014.