Concurrent Planning is an evidence based approach to achieving early permanence for young children where the risk to them may be identified pre-birth, at birth or soon after. Where the likelihood of adoption is high (in excess of 80%), the placement of choice may be dually approved foster carers/adopters—i.e., concurrent planning carers.

The programme was pioneered in the United States, but has been applied in the UK in limited settings since 1999 with remarkable results for the benefit of children. Government has endorsed the method and included it in practice guidance in 2011. A new Practice Guide to Concurrent Planning will be published by BAAF at the end of 2012.

As the only centre operating with multiple local authorities in the UK, Coram is now offering a national subscription programme to provide the practical and sustained support to other adoption agencies (both Local Authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies) seeking to apply the approach more widely.

The scheme offers a sustained and consistent programme of tools, development, consultation, and training to provide the means for agencies to build strategic support and embark upon the use of Concurrent Planning on a case-by-case basis within their Adoption Service or by the development of a dedicated team supporting a cluster of referrals depending on local circumstance.

This is a modular approach enabling authorities to tailor the package to meet their own needs and offers two levels of participation and a range of optional elements to meet local operational demands.

**KEY BENEFITS**

- Modular approach
- Tailored programme
- Local delivery
- Evidenced outcomes
- Sustained practice support
- National quality assurance

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**CORE SUBSCRIPTION**

£2000 per annum provides support to initiate a programme of concurrent planning, with the option of purchasing additional support for implementation. The core elements comprise:

- Needs assessment/consultation (one day) on application of model, training needs, process development and operational requirements such as contact venue
- One day training on the *Principles and Practice of Concurrent Planning*
- Free resources for information and enquiries and web-marketing for prospective concurrent carers
- Telephone advice/problem-solving on identifying suitable referrals and clarifying essential assessments/tasks to be undertaken prior to placement
- Provision of protocols for work with courts
- Membership of the national network of subscribing agencies, with access to practice sharing workshops at Coram’s head office (3x per annum) for case problem-solving and peer support
- Access to purchase places for potential concurrent planning carers on Coram’s information evening for enquirers and at their two day concurrent planning preparation groups in London

This package is designed to ensure learning and development across boundaries as part of a national development programme. Participating agencies may also purchase elements from the package described below.

**FULL DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE**

£10000 per annum (which includes the Core Subscription) offers an integrated package to support the establishment of a programme and delivery of the first cohort of placements.

- All the elements of the Core Subscription
- How to Deliver Concurrent Planning: 2-day modular programme for managers and social workers from child protection teams/LAC teams and adoption teams delivered on site and tailored to experience and local needs
- Selection of 2 days of training as appropriate for contact workers, judiciary, panels and guardians
- Access to dedicated consultant for operational coaching eg liaison with relevant team managers (R&A, child protection, LAC, Adoption and Fostering) re permanence planning and implementing concurrent planning systematically; advice on panel’s role, liaison with in-house training team to devise and deliver preparation groups for concurrent planning applicants; support re developing appropriate supervised contact resource.
- Ongoing advice and consultation/senior attendance at strategic planning meetings/advisory group and/or conference to facilitate setting up the system
- Coram staff jointly delivering information evening/preparation group over 2.5 days together with a local trainer in situ or access for 6 participants at Coram preparation group (in London)
- Consultation and support in managing the first three cases undertaken through the process via access to a dedicated advisor
- One day advice from systems analyst on local data and benchmarking against national trends and other projects with free use of tested diagnostic approach

The start up period for a concurrent planning approach (training and carer preparation) is a minimum of one year with 1-2 further years to embed and deliver to placement order. This programme is designed to enable and support embedded working and concurrent placements to be achieved.
Tariff for construction of bespoke programme

Training programme

How to deliver Concurrent Planning: 2-day modular programme for managers and social workers from child protection teams/LAC teams and adoption teams delivered on site and tailored to experience and local needs: £1,800 based on two consultants including resources

Half day training/CPD for contact workers, judiciary, panels and guardians: on quotation depending on scale and delivered by consultant/trainer: £500 per module

Direct delivery/group access

Information meeting/preparation group – bespoke local delivery
Coram staff co-delivering with local colleague, the specialist information evening/ preparation group for prospective concurrent carers over 2.5 days: £2500

Attendance at Coram information evening (delivered quarterly)
For London-based enquirers: £100 each

Attendance at Coram preparation group (delivered quarterly)
For London-based prospective concurrent carers: £500 each (including information evening)

Strategic development forum and case consultation

Case consultation
Dedicated adviser/consultant social worker to support the identification of referrals, and provide advice/consultation throughout the placement on issues including contact, parent assessments, supporting the carers and parents and preparation for court: £1,000 minimum (two days)

Strategic adoption forum
For lead members, senior managers, judiciary and stakeholders: £1000 (one day)

Personnel

Strategic adviser/early permanence leader/legal consultant: £600 per day
Concurrent Planning consultant social worker: £500 per day
Concurrent Planning social work trainer: £400 per day
Systems Analyst/specialist in adoption and early permanence: £400 per day
Contact supervisor consultation: £250 per day

All prices are plus VAT and travel costs and subject to 50% cancellation fee
Development plan for VAAs to apply concurrent planning

Introduction

A number of VAAs have expressed interest in working with Local Authorities to deliver concurrent planning programmes. Coram has limited funds between now and March 2013 to devote to supporting VAAs to extend capacity and increase geographical spread of concurrent planning. We are already working with Barnardo’s in the North East, and will continue to do so.

Proposal

- A free workshop at Coram’s head office in January 2013 open to all VAAs on the essential components of delivering a concurrent planning programme.
- More intensive support for a limited number of VAAs outside the areas where Concurrent Planning is currently available/ being developed (in the period November 2012 - March 2013).
- Ongoing support will be available under the Concurrent Planning Subscription scheme or by formation of a strategic partnership agreement with Coram.

Regional programme

Coram is based in East Anglia, East Midlands and London and therefore has bases for development in these areas and a defined programme of work in each to advance concurrent planning.

- In London Coram has a dedicated concurrent planning team placing children and we will offer direct access to preparation groups for potential concurrent planning carers referred by LAs/VAAs.
- We have an established partnership programme in Cambridgeshire and will explore extending this work to Norfolk/Suffolk/Essex.
- In the East Midlands Coram is working with Faith in Families, St Francis’ Children’s Society and other members in the region to develop a potential programme.

We propose to prioritise work in the North West because of the history of CP delivery there by the Goodman project with a group of local authorities and the experience of the courts.

In our work with Barnardo’s and in the North East, we propose to support and facilitate the development of a strategic adoption forum with LAs as well as providing further training tailored to local needs. We now have capacity for one further hub if one presents/emerges in the required timescale.

This work will form part of the Coram Centre for Early Permanence and will be complemented by review and advancement with selected partners including PACT of foster-first exemplars. Participants in this development are likely to include Hampshire, Cambridgeshire and South Tyneside as well as BAAF.

Timetable

November/early December: strategic hub meeting(s) with key VAAs and LA partners
January: workshop on delivery/ components of concurrent planning delivery for interested VAAs
February/March: bespoke training in the hubs with identified VAAs.

In future, beyond March, services to VAAs can still be provided/available on a cost recovery basis.

In addition we shall work with selected partners including PACT on foster-first exemplars.