
Calculating the cost of permanence: a case based approach

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Costs and outcomes research programme

- Explore the relationship between *needs*, costs and *outcomes* for vulnerable children and their families
- Process driven approach
- Bottom up costing methodology
 - Child as the unit of analysis
- Routinely collected child level data linked with time use activity and finance data to develop unit costs

Costs and outcomes research programme

- Unit costs and costs of care packages
- Longitudinal analysis of different pathways to permanence
- Comparative element to conduct cost effectiveness analysis
- Use of assumptions and ‘decision-rules’
- Transparency
- Potential costs avoided and cost savings

Conceptual underpinning

Separation between

- **‘Services’**
 - Placement, universal, targeted and specialist (therapeutic interventions, including groups and one-to-one)
- **‘Case management activity’**
 - Assessments, finding services, statutory visits, reviews
 - Activities are organised into processes

Variations

- Explanation for variations in costs

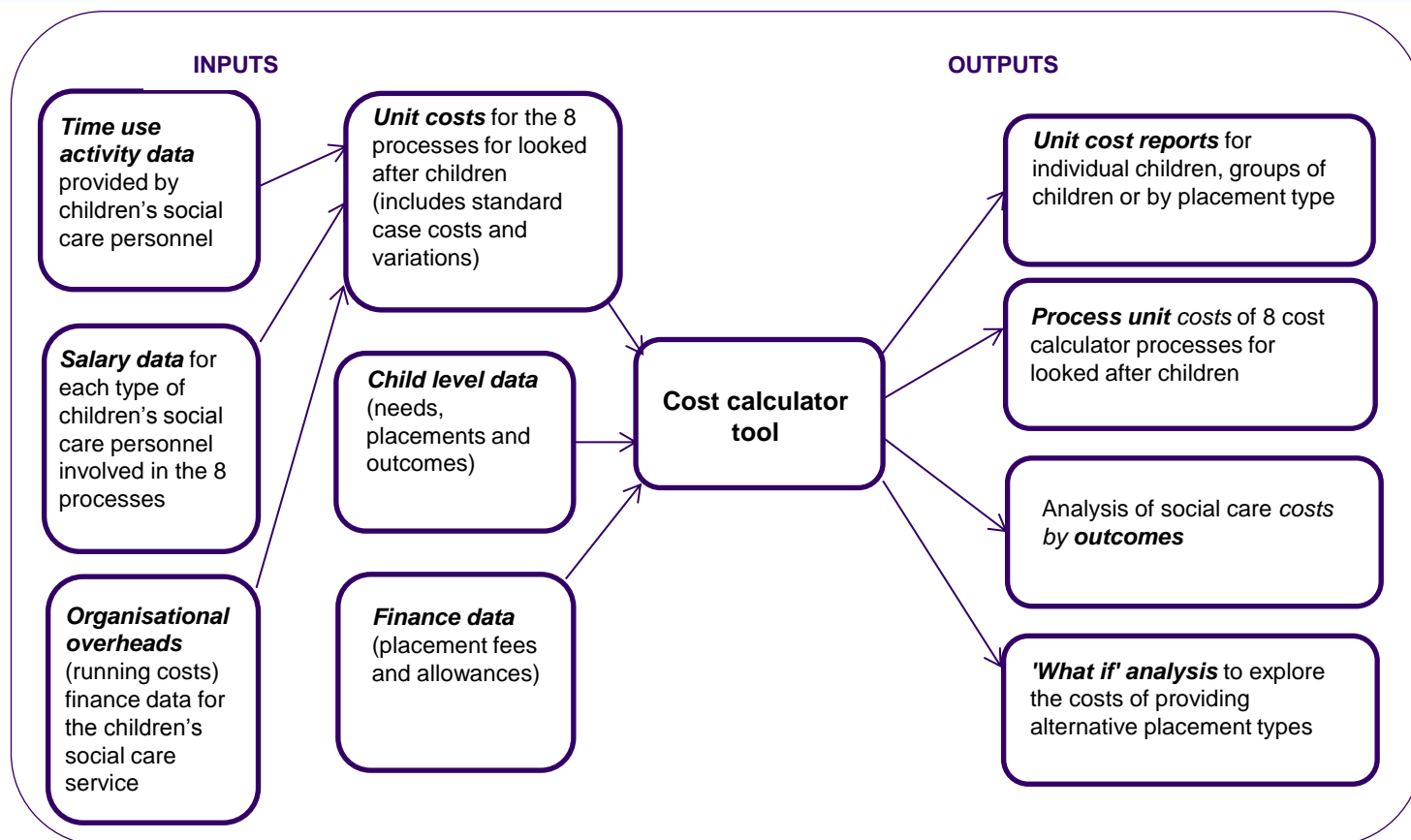
Development of a framework

- Looked after children; children in need; child protection
 - From point of referral to case closure
 - What happens?
 - Who is involved?
 - Standardised universally applicable framework
 - Decision making; Assessment; Care planning; Ongoing support; Referrals
 - Replicable across different contexts (and countries)

Collection of 'time use' activity data

- Focus groups
 - Distinction between case related and non-case related activities
 - Identification of key tasks and who carries these out
 - Identification of a 'standard case' and variations
 - Context setting
- Online surveys
 - Time use data for key tasks and activities
 - Data from large sample of workers
- Event records (Diaries)
 - Capture time use for specific case
 - Ongoing case work activity

Cost Calculator: Inputs and Outputs



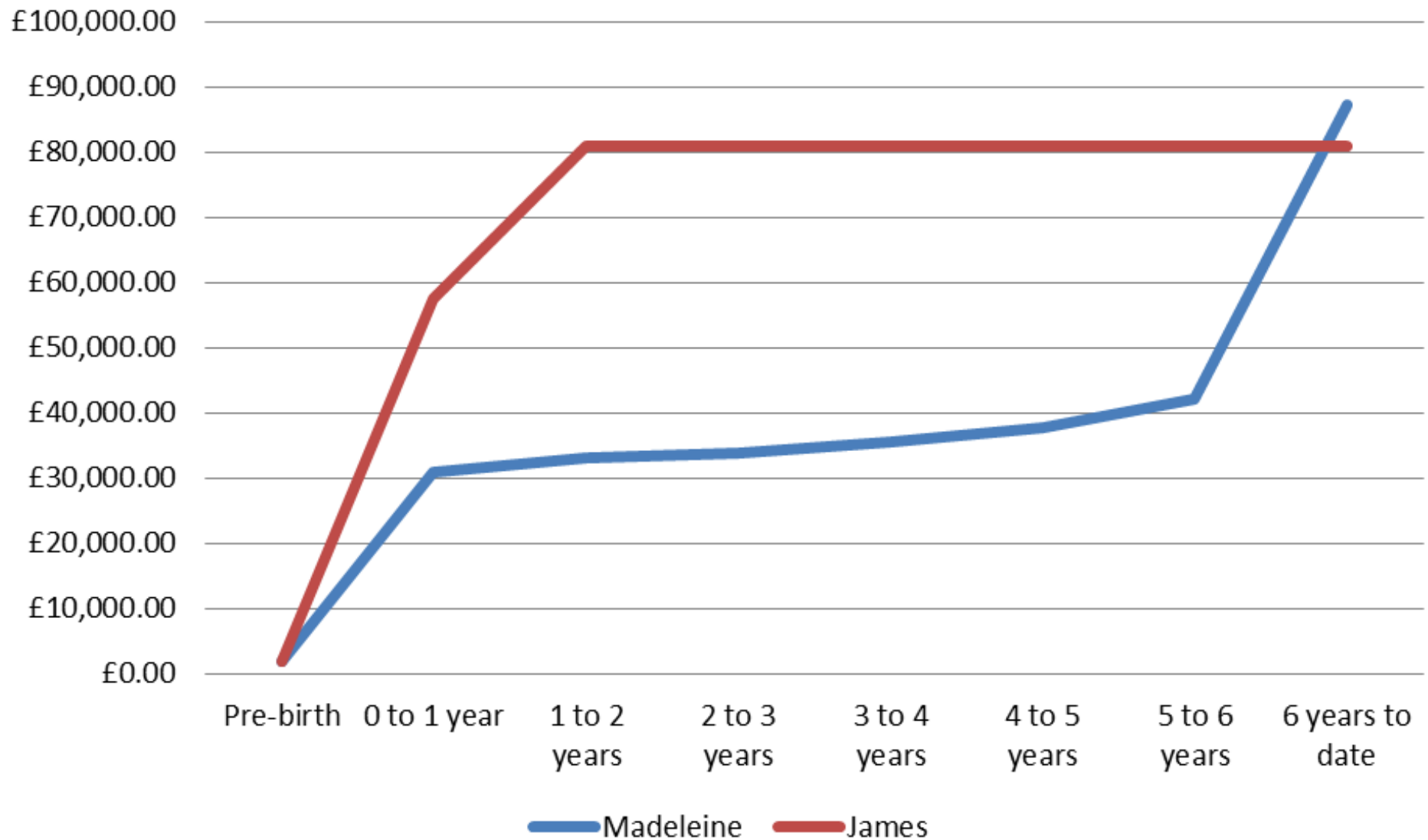
Making use of the outputs

- Individual child level
 - Illustrative case studies
- Aggregate level
 - Groups of children
 - By need
 - By placement
 - By outcome
- ‘What if’ analysis

Pathways to permanence

- Different pathways and cost trajectories
- Foster care
- Return home
- Adoption
- Special guardianship

Cumulative costs: Madeline and James



Permanence

- Getting it right:
 - Improved outcomes
 - Potential costs avoided
- Getting it wrong:
 - Instability
 - Placement finding incrementally higher costs
 - High levels of activity during early stages of new placements
 - Oscillating in and out of care
 - Impact on outcomes

Adapting the approach for adoption

- Collaboration with Coram
- DfE Innovation Programme project
- Build on existing evidence base (Professor Julie Selwyn)
- Map case management and support activities
- Calculate unit costs
- Extend the CCfCS and test the functionality
- Completion end March 2016

For more information

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