



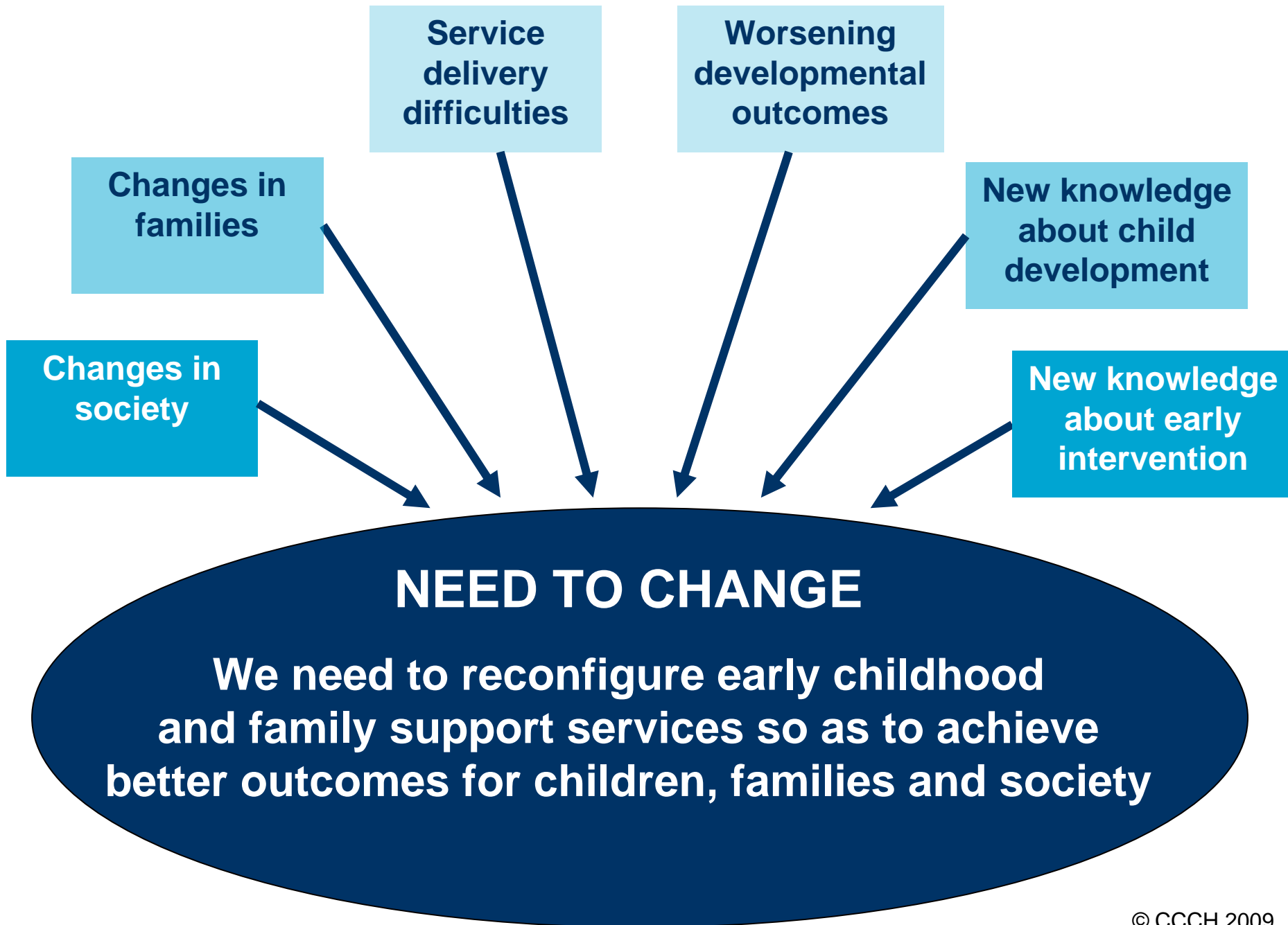
Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership

Community Hubs Forum

April 21st 2009

Rationale for Change

Healthier Kids. Healthier Future.





Healthier Kids. Healthier Future.

Changes in society

Over the past few decades, there have been significant changes in developed nations throughout the world:

- Rise in general prosperity – dramatic increases over the last few decades
- Reduction in government control over market and in government responsibility for provision of public services
- Fall in birth rates – an international phenomenon
- Increased movement of people between countries, leading to more diverse societies
- Globalisation of ideas and culture – world wide web

These global changes have been matched by economic, social and demographic changes in Australia:

- The birth rate has fallen below the population replacement level, and the proportion of children has fallen from 1:3 to 1:4
- There are more people who do not have (and do not intend to have) children
- Children are less of a social priority – the care of the aged has become more of a concern
- There have been dramatic changes in employment opportunities and conditions
- The cost of housing as a proportion of income has risen dramatically



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Changes in families

Families have become more varied in their structure, and more diverse culturally and ethnically:

- **families are smaller** (but houses are bigger)
- **extended families are also smaller** – there are fewer cousins, uncles and aunts
- **childlessness is increasing** – there are more people who neither have children nor intend to have children
- **mother's age at first birth is increasing** – from 25 in 1984 to 29 in 2004
- **more single parents**
- **more blended families**
- **more shared custody arrangements**
- **more same sex couple families**

These changes have important consequences:

- Children are growing up with fewer siblings, as well as smaller extended families
- Children see fewer examples of parenting as they grow up
- Because families have fewer children, parents are more intensely concerned about their welfare

Changes in family circumstances

The circumstances in which families are raising young children have also changed:

- more parents are working
- more mothers with babies are working
- more parents are doing shift work and working non-standard hours
- more parents are working longer hours
- more families are jobless
- more children are being raised in poverty

The impact of social change

- Partial erosion of traditional family and neighbourhood support networks, due to factors such as increased family mobility and the search for affordable housing
- Increase in the number of parents whose own experiences of being parented were compromised, and who therefore have difficulty parenting their own children
- All these factors have contributed to an increase in the number of families with complex needs and an undermining of confidence among parents in their ability to raise their children well



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Problems in meeting child & family needs via the current system

Challenges currently facing services for children & families

- The service system is having difficulty providing support to all families who are eligible
- Services cannot meet all the needs of families that they do serve - no single service is capable of meeting the complex needs of many families
- Families have difficulty finding out about and accessing the services they need
- Services are often not well integrated with one another and are therefore unable to provide cohesive support to families
- Services have difficulty tailoring their services to meet the diverse needs of families

Challenges currently facing services for children and families

- Services are typically focused on and/or funded on the basis of outputs rather than outcomes, and therefore tend to persist with service delivery methods that may not be optimally effective
- Services are typically treatment-oriented rather than prevention- or promotion-focused, and therefore cannot respond promptly to emerging child and family needs
- The service system does not maintain continuous contact with families of young children during the early years
- Many families are isolated and lack supportive personal networks - extended family, friends or other families of young children

Systemic issues in providing services to children & families

- Government departments, research disciplines and service sectors tend to work in 'silos', despite there being strong arguments for greater service integration and a 'whole of government' approach to service delivery
- Responsibility for provision of services to young children and their families is spread across three levels of government - federal, state, and local - with different planning processes and funding priorities
- Most specialist intervention services are already underfunded, and it is looking increasingly unlikely that they can ever be fully funded in their present forms



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Worsening developmental outcomes

Concern about worsening developmental outcomes

- *Mental health* - eg. depression, suicide, drug dependence
- *Physical health* - eg. asthma, obesity, diabetes, heart disease
- *Academic achievement* - eg. literacy levels, retention rates, educational outcomes
- *Social adjustment* - eg. employment, juvenile crime

Concern about worsening developmental outcomes

- The rates of all these developmental outcomes have risen or are unacceptably high
- The developmental pathways that lead to each of these outcomes can be traced back to early childhood
- All the poor developmental outcomes identified have associated social and financial costs that cumulatively represent a considerable drain on societal resources



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New research findings about early childhood development, family functioning & community development

New research findings about early childhood development

- The nature and significance of the early years
- The role and significance of relationships in child development
- The neurobiology of interpersonal relationships
- Cumulative impact of multiple risk and protective factors on child functioning
- The interplay between genes and environment

New research about family and community functioning: Key areas

- The relationship between parenting practices and child development
- Cumulative impact of multiple risk and protective factors on family functioning
- The importance of social support for parental and family functioning



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New research findings about the efficacy and cost effectiveness of early intervention



WHAT TO CHANGE

AIMS

LONG -TERM OUTCOMES

More supportive communities

Build rich, supportive and inclusive social networks and community environments for families of young children



Better interface between services and communities

Improve the interface between services and communities so as to be able to respond promptly to the emerging needs of young children and their families



More supportive service system

Build a strong universal service system that provides high quality, inclusive and well integrated child and family services



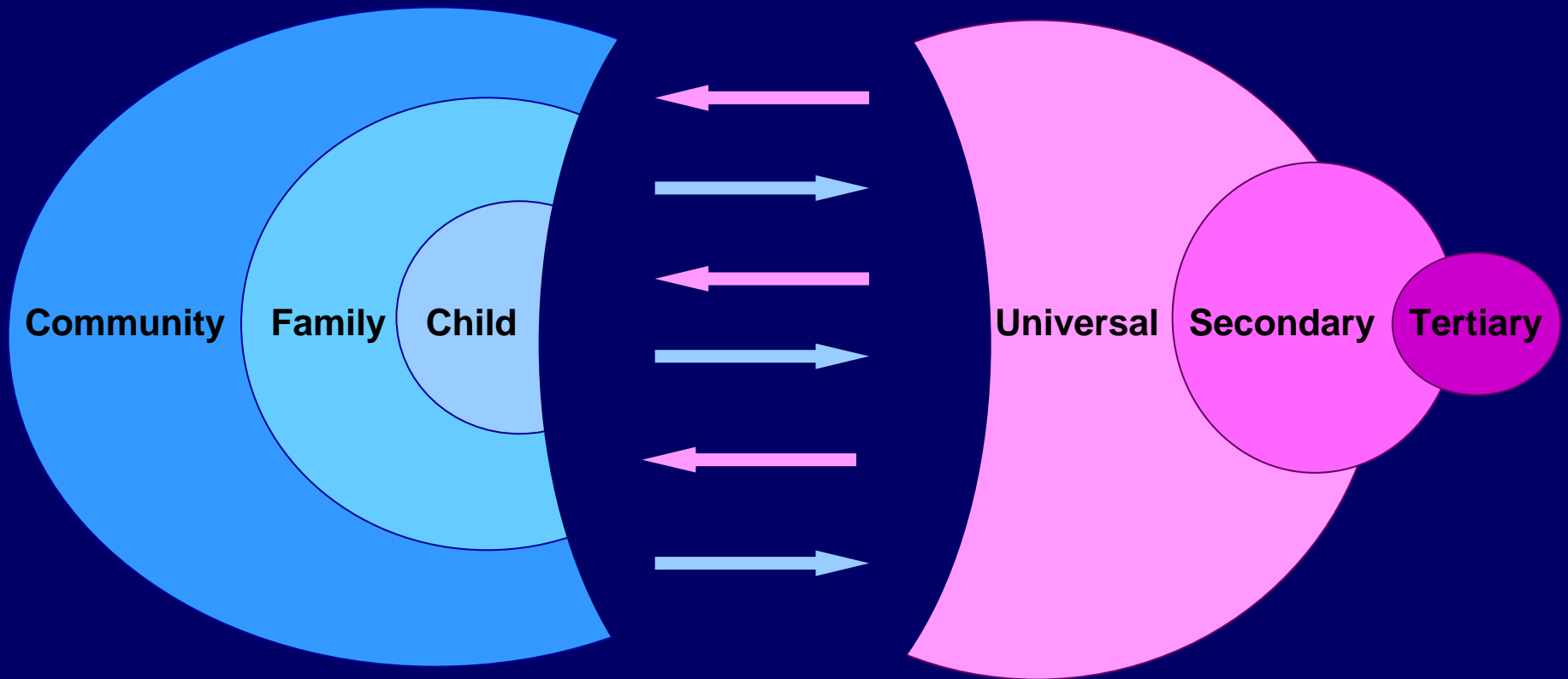
Improved health and developmental outcomes for young people



**CHILD / FAMILY /
COMMUNITY PLATFORM**

INTERFACE

SERVICE PLATFORM



**COHESIVE COMMUNITY
SUPPORT PROCESSES**
that provide rich and
supportive social
environments for young
children and their families

**EFFECTIVE LINKING
PROCESSES** that ensure
that the service system
responds promptly to the
emerging needs of young
children and their families

**INTEGRATED SERVICE
SYSTEM** that provides a
well-coordinated and easily
accessible tiered system of
services for young children
and their families

Community Platform

Interface

IMPROVED
OUTCOMES
FOR
CHILDREN &
FAMILIES

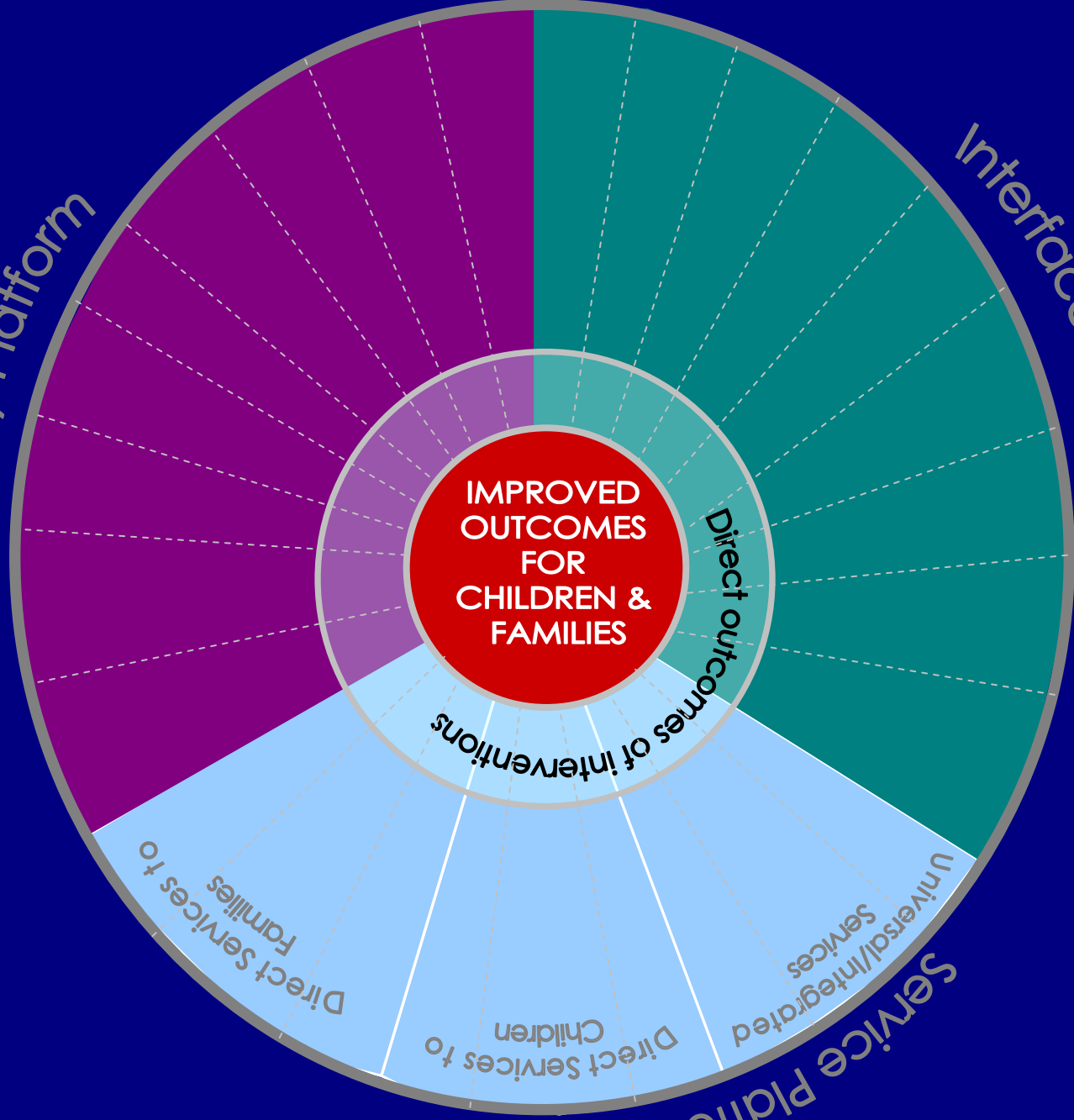
Direct outcomes of interventions

Direct Services to Families

Direct Services to Children

Universal/Integrated Services

Service Platform



Group Discussion

- How well integrated are services in Central Highlands? - eg, universal, secondary and tertiary?
- How well does the current system identify issues for families/children early and promptly respond to them?
- What might you need to do differently?

Translating the Research

The existing service system

- Demand greater than services available
- Families have complex needs - often beyond capability of any single service
- Difficulty accessing services
- Socio-economic gradient of access
- Focus on treatment rather than prevention/early intervention
- Episodic contact

The existing service system

- Fragmented service delivery
 - Different sectors (health, education, welfare)
 - Different funding streams
 - Different cultures
- Lack of co-ordination
- Narrow programmatic criteria for eligibility
- Variable understanding of early years issues
- Local community generally has limited accountability or responsibility

Community based services

Child health
information

Childcare

School

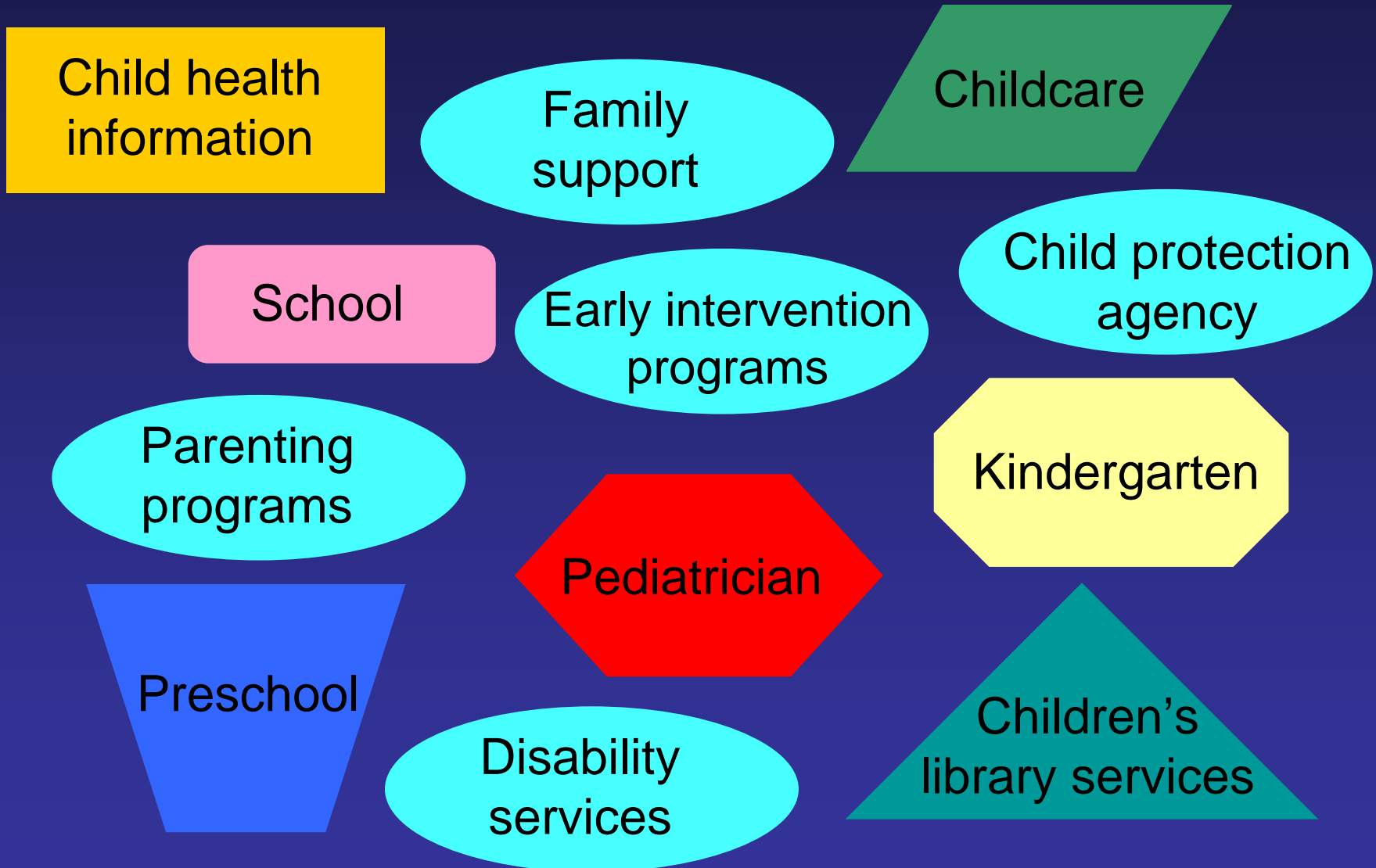
Kindergarten

Pediatrician

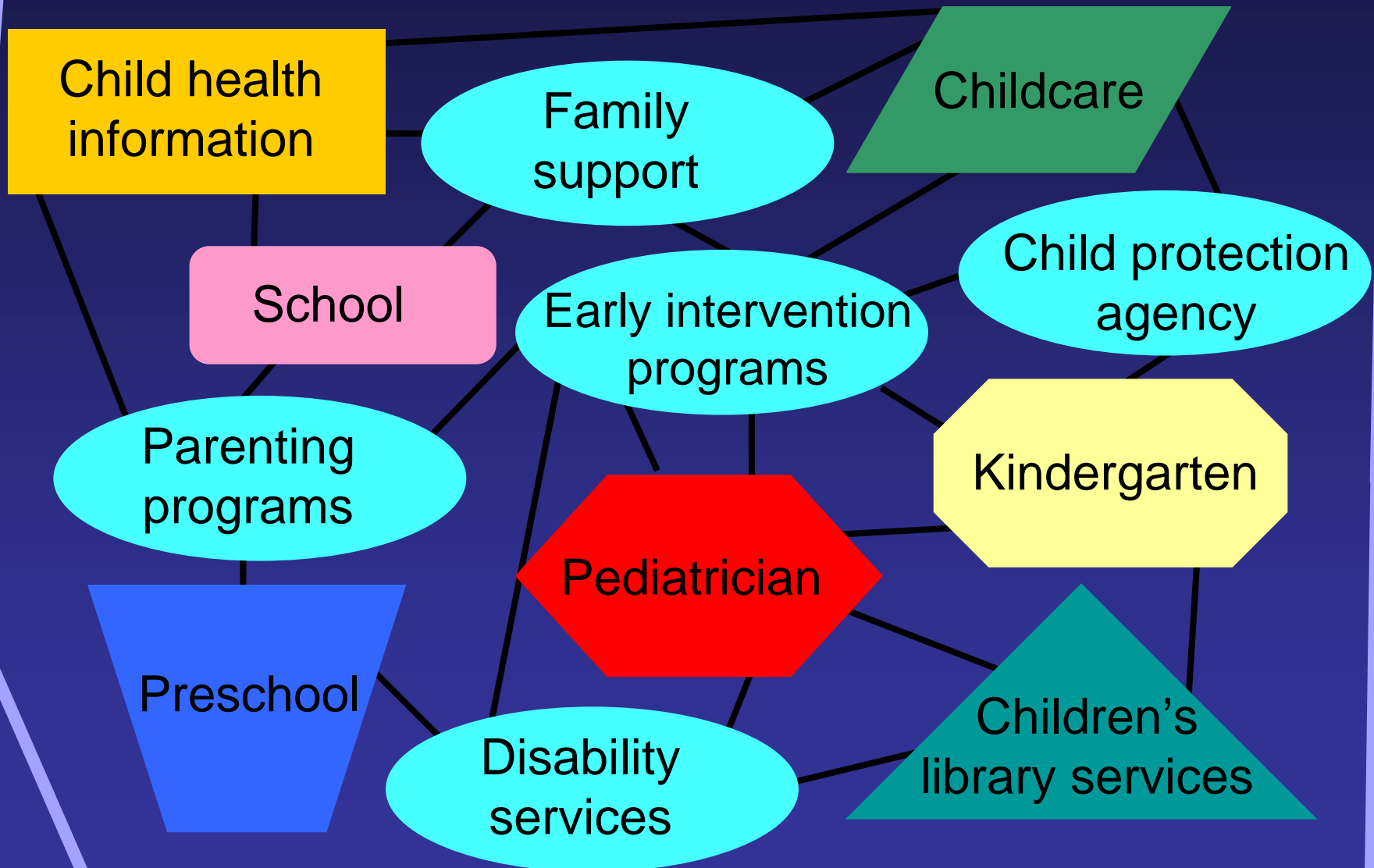
Preschool

Children's
library services

If concerns or risk factors



Mobilizing the community



Integrated Service Delivery for Early Childhood



Systems development challenges

- Universal vs targeted
- Integrated vs stand alone
- Place-based vs case based
- Workforce capacity
 - Recruitment -
 - Qualifications requirements
 - Remuneration and conditions

How are systems responding?

- Most countries have decided that their early childhood and family support service systems need to be strengthened:
 - greater integration of services
 - expanding early childhood services
 - developing national early childhood strategies

How can services be better integrated?

- Alignment of policies and practices at the policy, regional planning and direct service delivery level
- Linkages between services that vary along a continuum from coexistence to integration
- A core set of universal services operating under a single governance structure: child care, long day care, preschool, and maternal and child health

How can services be better integrated?

- Traditional forms of child care and kindergarten integrated into a seamless early care and learning approach
- A wide range of additional services according to the needs of the families involved
- Single location or multiple locations - precinct
- Part of a wider service system with a single point of entry giving access to a range of services

Features of Integrated Services

TRANSLATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

What are the features of effective services?

- Common vision and strong leadership
- Development of seamless interdisciplinary teamwork
- High quality services for children
- Effective partnerships with parents
- Time release for collaboration, training and ongoing support
- Roles and responsibilities reflected in job descriptions and working conditions

Challenges our conceptualisation of Leadership

“ The complex demands of running a Children’s Centre means that the head has the task of coalescing different styles of early education, child care, family support and adult community learning into one institution and this requires a distinctive and specialist model of leadership development.”

(Whalley, Whitaker: Briefing Paper for Minister Margaret Hodge, 1999)

Challenges

How to manage simultaneously in the same centre for children and families both prescribed programmes with short term funding, short term prescribed targets and tighter rigid accountability schemes and developmental programmes with less resources, different targets and accountability schemes in a comprehensive and coherent manner?

Challenges

How to engage in whole system change across communities and within and across agencies?

- not being 'done to'
- user driven
- managing up
- cultural humility
- enabling governance

Challenges

How to change professional practice?

- silo mentality
- power sharing
- equal and active partnerships

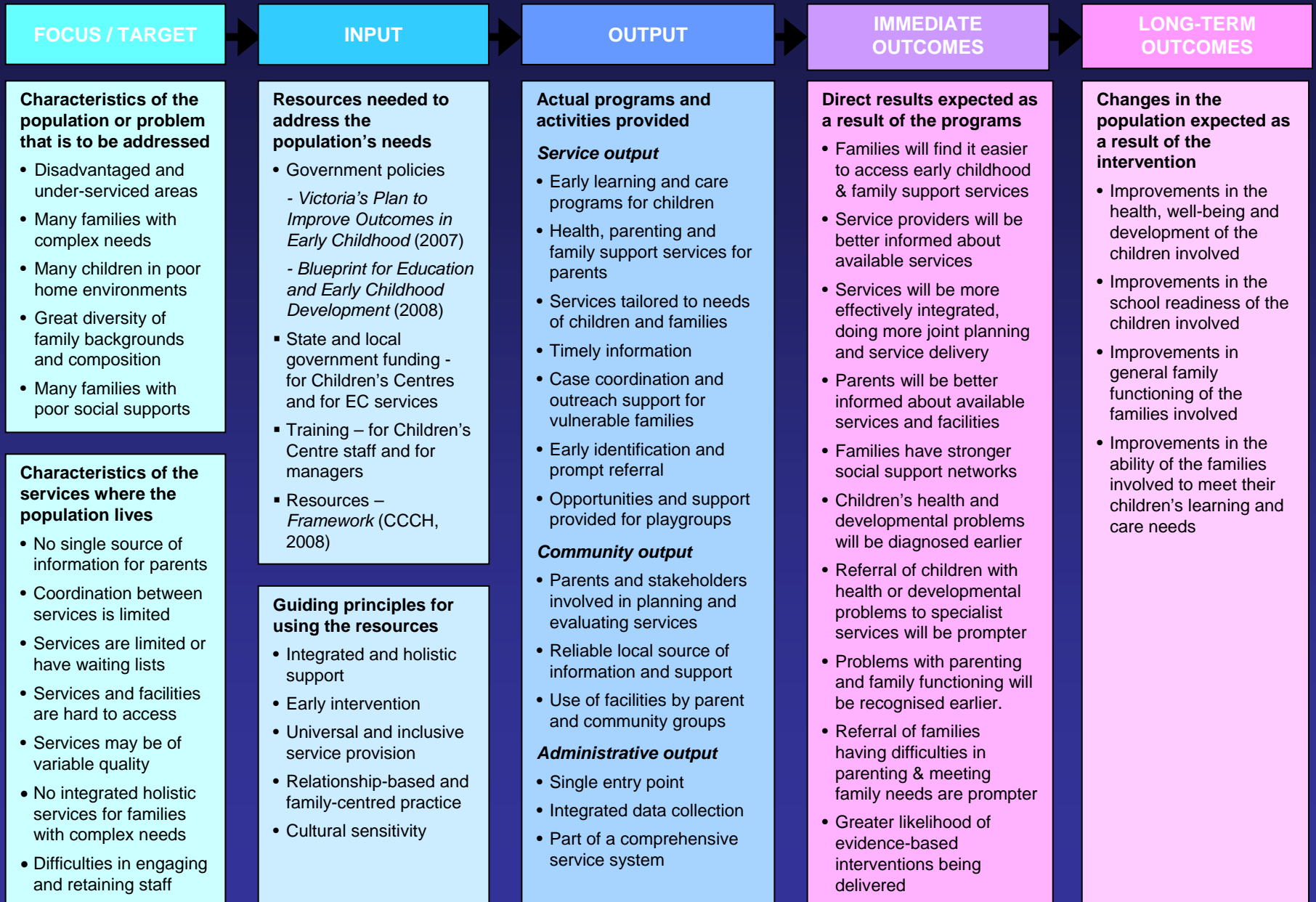
Challenges

How to be locally responsive

“Standardization is the enemy of sustainable development”

(Hargreaves)

PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES



PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES



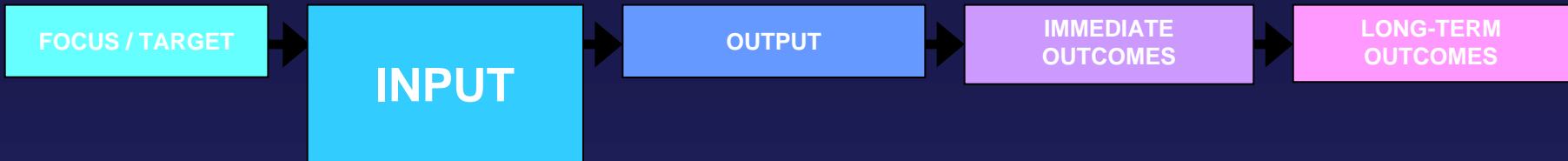
Characteristics of population or problem that is to be addressed

- Disadvantaged and under-serviced areas
- Many families with complex needs
- Many children in poor home environments
- Great diversity of family backgrounds and composition
- Many families with poor social supports

Characteristics of the services where the population lives

- No single source of information for parents
- Coordination between services is limited
- Services are limited or have waiting lists
- Services and facilities are hard to access
- Services may be of variable quality
- No integrated holistic services for families with complex needs
- Difficulties in engaging and retaining staff

PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES



Resources needed to address the population's needs

- Government policies
 - *Victoria's Plan to Improve Outcomes in Early Childhood (2007)*
 - *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development (2008)*
- State and local government funding - for Children's Centres and for EC services
- Training – for Children's Centre staff and for managers
- Resources – *Framework to support the establishment and operation of children's centres (CCCH, 2008)*

Guiding principles for using the resources

- Integrated and holistic support
- Early intervention
- Universal and inclusive service provision
- Relationship-based and family-centred practice
- Cultural sensitivity

PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES



Actual programs and activities provided

Service output

- Early learning and care programs for children
- Health, parenting and family support services for parents
- Services tailored to needs of children and families
- Timely information for parents
- Case coordination and outreach support for vulnerable families
- Early identification and prompt referral
- Opportunities and support provided for playgroups

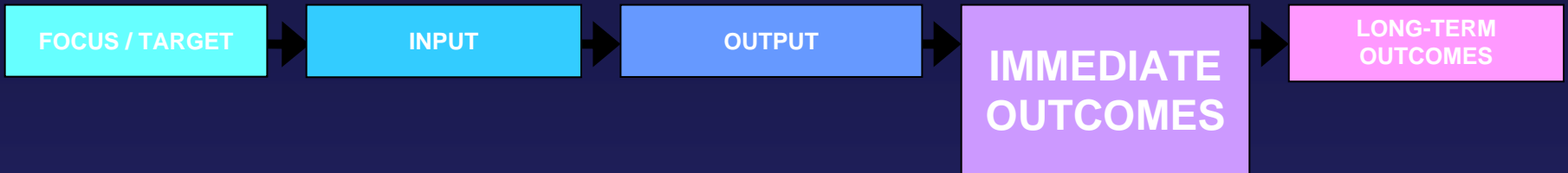
Community output

- Parents and stakeholders involved in planning and evaluating services
- Reliable local source of information and support
- Use of facilities by parent and community groups

Administrative output

- Single entry point
- Integrated data collection
- Part of a comprehensive service system

PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES

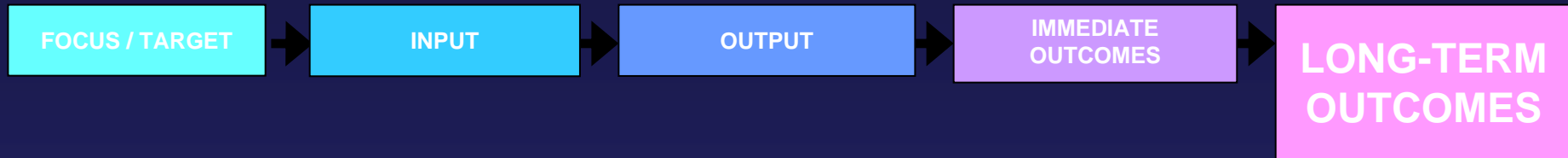


Direct results expected as a result of the programs

- Families will find it easier to access early childhood & family support services
- Service providers will be better informed about available services
- Services will be more effectively integrated, doing more joint planning and service delivery
- Parents will be better informed about available services and facilities
- Families have stronger social support networks

- Children's health and developmental problems will be diagnosed earlier
- Referral of children with health or developmental problems to specialist services will be prompter
- Problems with parenting and family functioning will be recognised earlier
- Referral of families having difficulties in parenting & meeting family needs will be prompter
- Greater likelihood of evidence-based interventions being delivered

PROGRAM LOGIC FOR INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S CENTRES

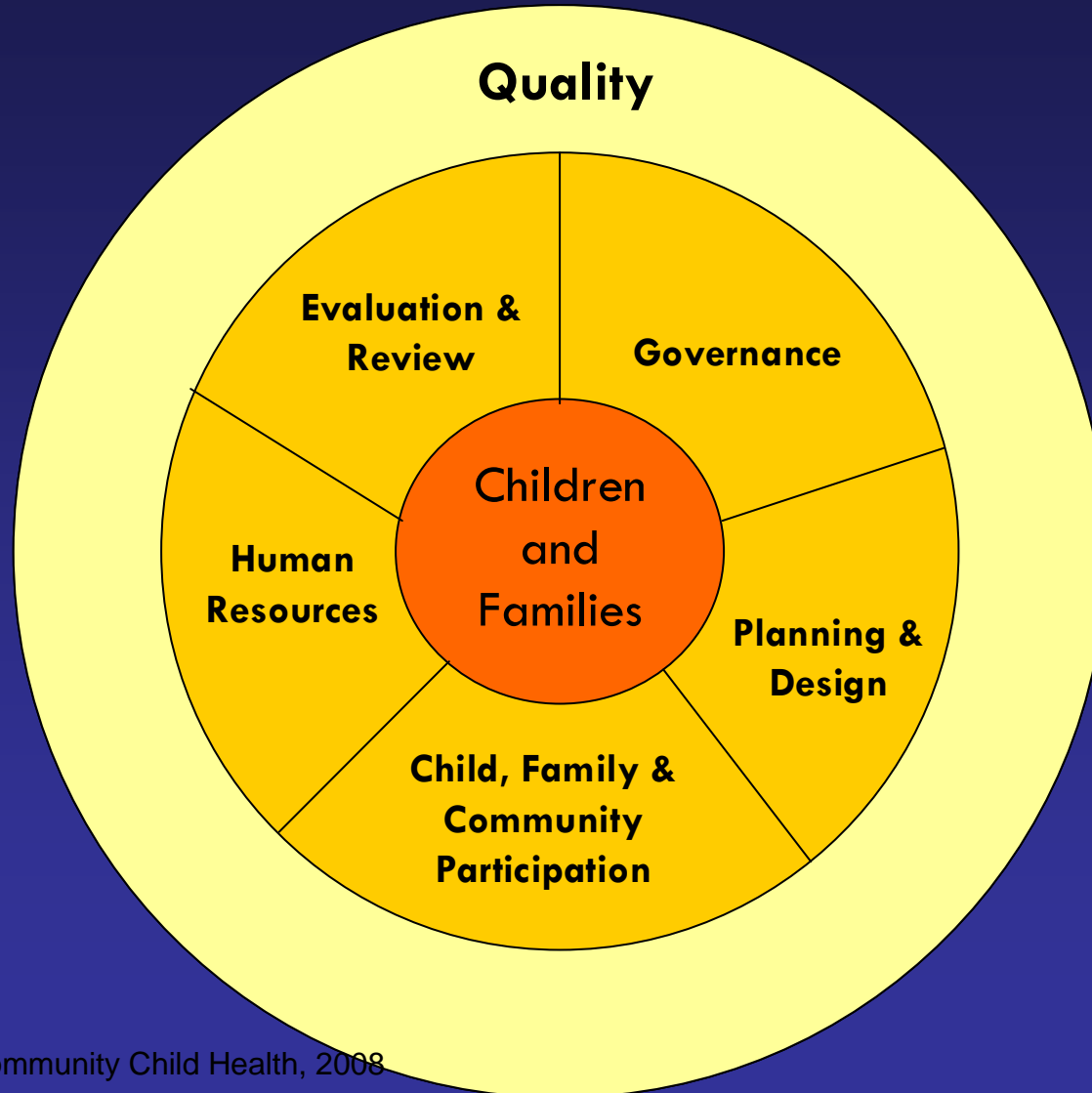


Changes in the population expected as a result of the intervention

- Improvements in the health, well-being and development of the children involved
- Improvements in the school readiness of the children involved
- Improvements in general family functioning of the families involved
- Improvements in the ability of the families involved to meet their children's learning and care needs

A Guide to Integrated Service Delivery

QUALITY AND INTEGRATED SERVICES



Guiding Principles

- 1 - Governance and planning is informed and inclusive
- 2 - Service philosophy and provision is driven by the needs of children and their families
- 3 - Child, family and community participation is actively promoted and supported
- 4 - Professional practice is based on respectful relationships
- 5 - Children's centre practice and programs are evaluated and reviewed

Co-location

Services operate independently and have no formal or informal links, but are co-located

Co-ordination

Services operate independently, but are co-located and coordinate to provide multi-agency services to families with multiple needs

Collaboration

Services combine to form a single entity operating from a single location and providing integrated interdisciplinary centre-based services



Self-Assessment Tool

- The self assessment tool (SAT) is designed to provide established centres/services or those in the planning stages with a process to assess their current position in service delivery against the contemporary knowledge of best practice in centre based children's services and the core components of quality child and family services.

A Guide to Integrated Service Delivery

Step 1: Developing a shared vision

Step 2: Identifying desired outcomes

Step 3: Identifying services to be delivered

Step 4: Addressing practical issues

Step 5: Finalizing governance arrangements

Step 6: Drafting an action plan

Step 1: Developing a shared vision

- Identifying the prime target - child or family
- Engaging parents in the process
- Having time to develop a shared understanding as to why services need to be integrated
- Address different professional ideologies, cultures, and organizational aims
- Time for ongoing dialogue between staff, parents and community
- Clear and realistic aims and objectives which are understood and accepted by all stakeholders

Step 2: Identifying desired outcomes

- Parents are strong partners in decision making and there is an understanding of parents views/needs
- Clear agreed vision and philosophy
- There is a focus on outcomes, rather than on outputs
- Both short term and long term outcomes are identified up front
- Reporting and accountability systems that focus on outcomes

Step 3: Identifying services to be delivered

- Recognition of different forms of integrated models of children's centres.
- Recognition that integrated service delivery is 'more than just a building'.
- Focus on quality aspects of service provision
- Focus on the support required not the building
- Challenging existing job descriptions and working conditions that are too rigid to allow fully integrated services and trans-disciplinary teamwork

Step 4: Addressing practical issues

- **Development of effective:**
 - Trust between collaborating agencies
 - decision making mechanisms
 - ways to manage a range of funding 'buckets'
 - ongoing support for staff groups
 - Documentation of roles and responsibilities
 - leadership in managing change and maintaining staff morale

Step 4: Addressing practical issues

- Allow time for development of collaborative processes and protocols
- An agreed timetable and incremental approach to change.
- Adequate access to and provision of support services to maintain the integrated networking model
- Staff with the right experience knowledge and approach are recruited - a new type of 'hybrid' professional may facilitate joint working.
- Joint interdisciplinary and interagency training, support and team building.

Step 5: Finalizing governance arrangements

- Clear governance structure and accountability mechanisms are in place
- There is strong backing for the initiative from key decision makers at senior levels.
- Common use and understanding of language
- Community participation
- Support for community based management committees who are required to commit time developing policies, employing staff etc.

Step 6: Drafting an action plan

- Effective communication and information sharing between all agencies and staff - a supportive interagency network
- Parents feel welcomed and able to participate in all levels of action planning
- Focus on evidence based practice
- The service is regularly monitored and evaluated, with policies and procedures being reviewed regularly in the light of changing circumstances and new knowledge.

Group Discussion

- What are the implications for current practice in Central Highlands?
- What needs to be put in place to work in a more integrated way?
- What have we got that we can build on?
- What are the key priority actions?
- How do we take these forward?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- Other issues to be resolved?

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