



Weekly Snapshot from EFF

Week ending- 16/5/25

Essex Family Forum receives many comments through our online Graffiti Wall, at events and through our Family Champions. Although we are not able to address all of these through this snapshot, please be assured that all feedback is raised with services and issues that are shared repeatedly are being highlighted.

You said:	We did:
<p>Wait times for EHC needs assessment</p> <p>EFF are very aware that for quite some time parent carers are feeling the impact of the lengthy waits for an EHC needs assessment. We have addressed this repeatedly with the LA and have communicated the changes they have made to try and improve things.</p>	<p>In order to gather data and strengthen our conversations with the LA we produced a short survey for those waiting or recently completed the process. This data supports everything we know and shows that families are seeing little impact on the changes so far. The survey will remain open to measure any impact down the line, but you can see the report on the current survey results on this link as well as the next steps we feel are necessary as we ask the LA for a response.</p> <p>http://essexfamilyforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/EHCNA-process-survey-Feb-to-May25-1.pdf</p>
<p>Update - Mid Essex - D-Bit team from social care.</p> <p>Appointments too infrequent to have effect and often cancelled. Struggling to find respite at crisis point.</p>	<p>DBIT work with families to support them with Solution Focused conversations and focus on their resources and strengths to manage and cope with things. The approach can have very positive outcomes for some families but may not be successful for everyone. They aim to have weekly sessions with families, but these can be changed to fit with the families' work/home schedule.</p> <p>Respite, or short breaks can be provided to families in a variety of ways. Some short breaks can be provided to disabled children without the need for an assessment from social care - families would register and (if eligible) book via the website https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/</p> <p>Other funded support would require a Child and Family Assessment to be completed by</p>



	<p>Children’s Social Care. Should the needs of a child or their family change and they face a crisis situation they should contact their social worker (or if they don’t have a social worker then the Childrens & Family hub).</p> <p>If a family is unhappy about the support provided and they are unable to resolve this by talking to their social worker or their social worker’s team manager then they could make a complaint https://www.essex.gov.uk/complaints-and-compliments and this would be looked into by the relevant service manager.</p>
<p>Update - Mid Essex – ADHD Medication</p> <p>A parent has reported that her son's ADHD medication keeps being changed due to shortages and now he has no medication at all. Other parents have reported medication constantly being changed and difficulty in getting through to the Paediatrician to arrange medication reviews</p>	<p>The Mid & South Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) have issued a letter which will be circulated via our social media shortly, you can also view this information by clicking here. This provides an update on prescribing and monitoring of ADHD medication in Mid & South Essex.</p> <p>If you have any questions, there is a link to the ICB website’s FAQ page and contact details on the letter.</p>
<p>Update – NEE Dental Services</p> <p>We received feedback from a support group in NEE who shared feedback from Parent & carers who are reporting difficulties in accessing appropriate and timely dental care for C&YP with SEND. Delays in accessing dental treatment is resulting in issues becoming more severe and requiring more significant treatment.</p>	<p>We raised this with the relevant teams in NEE and have received the following information:</p> <p><i>With regard to wider support for patients within SNEE, our first port of call for a routine dental appointment is always the Find a Dentist website Find a dentist - NHS. Most patients will need to contact dental practices and may be asked to be added to a waiting list for a regular appointment.</i></p> <p><i>If they need is more urgent, there is our Dental Priority Access and Stabilisation Service (DPASS) in four Essex practices. DPASS is available to those with an urgent need or to anyone who falls into a vulnerable group, as below. It will enable patients to be seen and then treated but ongoing care is not guaranteed following that course of</i></p>



	<i>treatment. Patients should contact NHS 111 to be signposted to a practice or those who are working with vulnerable groups could ask for details to our webpage Dental Priority Access and Stabilisation Service - NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB to access current information and be able to directly contact the practices.</i>
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In other news...

- We are thrilled to announce that Essex Family Forum has achieved the Health and Wellbeing Accreditation! This milestone is a testament to our team's dedication and hard work. We couldn't be prouder of this achievement and are excited to continue supporting our community's health and wellbeing. Thank you for being part of our journey!
- Claire had a stand at the Healthier Habits Hub in Witham last week – it was very well attended and as well as meeting some parents of SEND children and young people, she made links with services including Kinetix, a local Parkour provider who offer SEND sessions.
- Claire attended the monthly Therapies Delivery Group for Mid Essex on Monday which updates on the progress being made with delivering the Balanced System for Therapies into schools.
- Claire & Stacey attended the Essex All Age Autism Partnership Board on Wednesday and heard presentations from the SEND Strategy Team (Autism) and the Autism Navigation Service.
- Claire attended the Mid Essex SEND Joint Working Group on Wednesday. We listened to a presentation on PINS, with details on the learnings from the pilot that finished at the end of March. We also heard updates from partners within the Mid quadrant, including Autism Outreach Service and SEND Sensation.
- Stacey attended Early years Co-ordination and Oversight group. We had discussions around parent/carers deferring their child's start to school. The need for clear guidance, and the impact of EHC needs assessment delays. Emphasis on providing additional written guidance for parent/Carers considering deferral. A 'Starting reception' booklet is now being considered, to help inform parents of options available, and things to consider.
- Stacey and Claire attended Parent/carers support drop-in group. The South Essex quadrant manager attended who is the lead for EOTIS. The meeting focused on the



development of key workstreams for EOTIS over the next five terms, emphasising co-production with families and support groups. The Local Authority needs to improve EOTAS provision and EHCP processes, with policies and training currently under review. New roles are being created to support EOTIS pupils, and data collection is ongoing to understand the increasing demand, particularly among children with autism. The system faces challenges, including capacity issues and the need for better mental health services, but efforts are being made to improve support and communication with families.

- Kiri and Kate attended the SET CYP MH focus group this week where they presented feedback gathered from Family Champions on Reasonable Adjustments for Mental Health in autistic children and young people for the group's Board Report. Thank you so much to all of our lovely Family Champions who took the time to feedback to us. It's very much appreciated.
- This week Sarah attended the MAZE coffee mornings in both Mistley and Harwich and gathered feedback from parents and carer about what is working /isn't working in North East Essex.
- On behalf of Essex Family Forum Sarah attended a meeting to discuss the 'Future Priorities of the Essex Child and Family Well Being Service' and also the SET (Southend Essex and Thurrock) Therapies Transformation Delivery Partnership.
- Kate attended the Parents of Teens support group at Rayleigh Mega Centre, hosted by Maggie Butler at South Essex Extended Services. It was a great chance to connect with parents and carers, listen to their experiences, offer support and signposting, and share helpful information in a welcoming space.
- Kate attended the Healthier Habit Hubs event in Laindon. It was a great opportunity to connect with families and professionals, share information, distribute copies of the ND pack, gather feedback, and network with other services.
- Katrina and Kate were invited to attend the MyOTAS presentation day, where they discussed the ND pack and the challenges of digital poverty and accessible documents raised by the group. MyOTAS shared updates on their current offer and future plans, while Kate and Katrina spoke about their collaborative work, highlighting how feedback has shaped forum discussions and meetings, and the strength of their working relationship. The event provided a fantastic opportunity to gain further insight into MyOTAS' initiatives and the meaningful impact they have on the local community. They also used the opportunity to network with various other charities and ECC staff in the local area.



Please note: The Graffiti Wall and Snapshot is designed to give anonymised feedback and cannot be used to answer individual queries.

All EFF staff are part time and work on a flexible basis. If there are weeks when a quadrant does not appear represented in this snapshot, we are still working hard. Please bear this in mind.