



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

The background of the slide is a photograph of a beach at sunset. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. In the foreground, the silhouettes of several children are captured in various playful poses, such as jumping and running. Their reflections are visible in the shallow water on the beach. The overall mood is one of joy and childhood.

# **When is a child better off in Care ?**

# Imperatives

- Moral
- Statutory
- Effective

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# The Future is not Inevitable

It's everyone's responsibility

OR

Seek you the state, the state will keep you (and  
your children) safe

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# The Key Process

- The expectations of society set out by the national and local government
- Full freedom for the professions in delegation to the most local practical level
- Strong quality assurance of outcomes, not processes and wherever possible not proxy indicators / outputs

# A Shared Commitment

“The support and protection of children cannot be achieved by a single agency... Every services has to play its part. All staff must have placed upon them the clear expectation that their primary responsibility is to the child and his or her family.”

Herbert Laming

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# Aim

Fundamental change to the structure, delivery and outcomes of service to and for children.

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# Importance of loving Families who set clear boundaries

## Children

- Who achieve their potential
- Who become full members of society
- Who become effective citizens of a modern democracy
- Who acquire the skills for economic independence
- Who embrace change throughout their lives

## Articulating a value base for organisational change serves a number of purposes:

- Creating a workforce with the right skill set, for the task of working with the most difficult to reach families in a complex society
- Knowing what skill sets to prioritise when resources are limited
- Drawing staff together from disparate roles and isolated working conditions into a common shared understanding
- A basis on which to build policy and procedure
- A way of matching applicants to the organisation. They can be selected and can self select according to the value base
- Providing a practical way to become a 'safer employer'

# The need for:

- Family Support – a loving nurturing home environment for each child
- Community support – a positive childhood encouraging participation and promoting sport, culture and arts entitlements
- School / Education Support – raising achievements for all, ensuring individual children reach their potential arranging additional support for those who require it
- Health Support – ensuring children develop strong decision making capacity

# Delivery

- The commitment to putting the well being and interests of children first
- Children who are heard in all decisions that affect them and be given the opportunity collectively to influence policy in the change programme and beyond
- Transparent accountability and clearly articulated levels of responsibility, and
- Increase community engagement and a commitment to deliver inclusive, accessible services

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# Our Priorities

## Cultural Change

- Constitution
- Church
- HSE
- Staff Empowerment
- Public Service / Customer Orientation
- Children First

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# Our Priorities

Revise and implement consistent, child protection procedures in line with revised National Guidelines Children First

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# Our Priorities

Complete a series of reforms necessary to provide a comprehensive range of high quality services for children in care

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# Our Priorities

Promote effective multidisciplinary shared practice  
and efficient community engagement

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# Our Priorities

To work with government to ensure priorities as identified in the Programme for Government are implemented

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# A Continuum

- Services - Universal
  - Enhanced
  - Targeted
- From 1.4 million to 20
- Parenting, Co-Parenting, Corporate Parenting

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# Gate Keeping and Consistency

- Community and Family
- Initial Assessment
- Full Assessment

# In the Interests of the Child

## Vacuum

- Independence ?
  - Benefits of an Adversarial System

- Criteria:
- Parenting Capacity
  - Parent Child Interaction
  - Parental Readiness and Capacity to Change

- Risk Evaluation:
- Specificity
  - Severity
  - Future Risk/Repetition
  - Parental Involvement
  - Corroboration

Supervision

# Requirements

- The support and permission of the community
- Well defined local mechanisms for accountability to ensure focused, disciplined relationships among all those promoting the welfare of children
- High support to enable high challenge within clear lines of management accountability. Strategy and policy are on a nationwide basis and decisions and practice taken forward at the most local practical level



Crisis → Credibility → Confidence

Rights + Responsibility + Respect

Disaggregation, Distraction, Drift

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# Next Steps

1. Re-issue Children First
2. Practice Guide
3. Consult on an Assessment Framework
4. Capacity review
5. Proposal to Legislate
6. New Operational Arrangements

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# Aspirations

We seek to nurture Irish Young People who:

- Are confident, well motivated and fully rounded
- Are literate and numerate to a level at or above their peers in the rest of the world
- Fully understand and are able to play their part as citizens of a modern democratic society
- Seize opportunities regardless of their background but have the skills and aptitude to work flexibly and to embrace change throughout their life

# Postscript 1

## The art of the Possibilities

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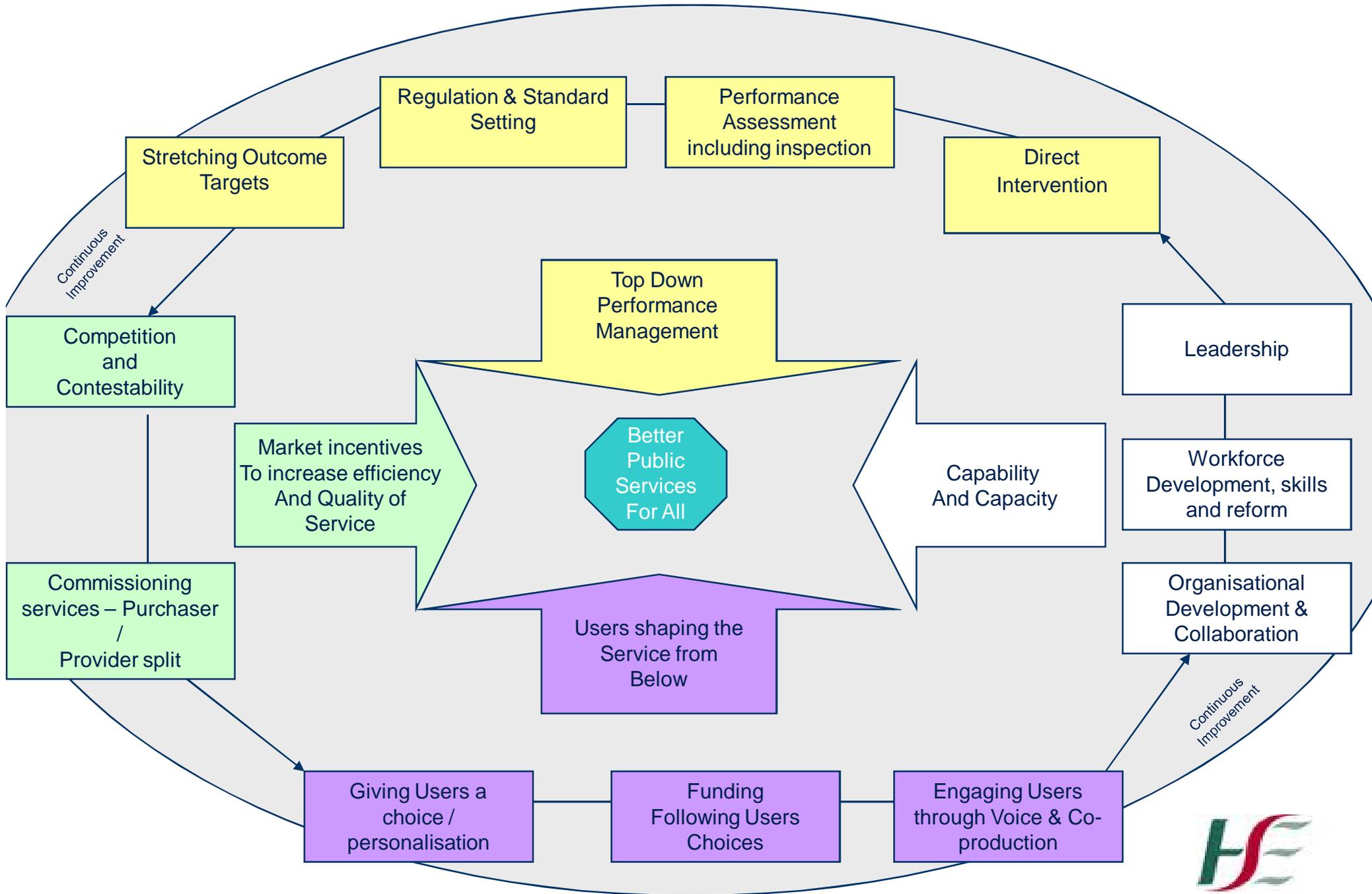
# Postscript 2

## A time of Consequences

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VALUES BEHAVIOUR RELATIONSHIPS

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# Postscripts

## The MYSTERIES

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