

Using quality improvement to fight child poverty in clinical practice

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

Poverty is the most important determinant of child health in the UK, associated with adverse health, developmental, educational and long-term social outcomes¹. Paediatric nurses and doctors feel powerless when faced with child poverty, with training gaps and underdeveloped pathways leading to missed opportunities to help these families².

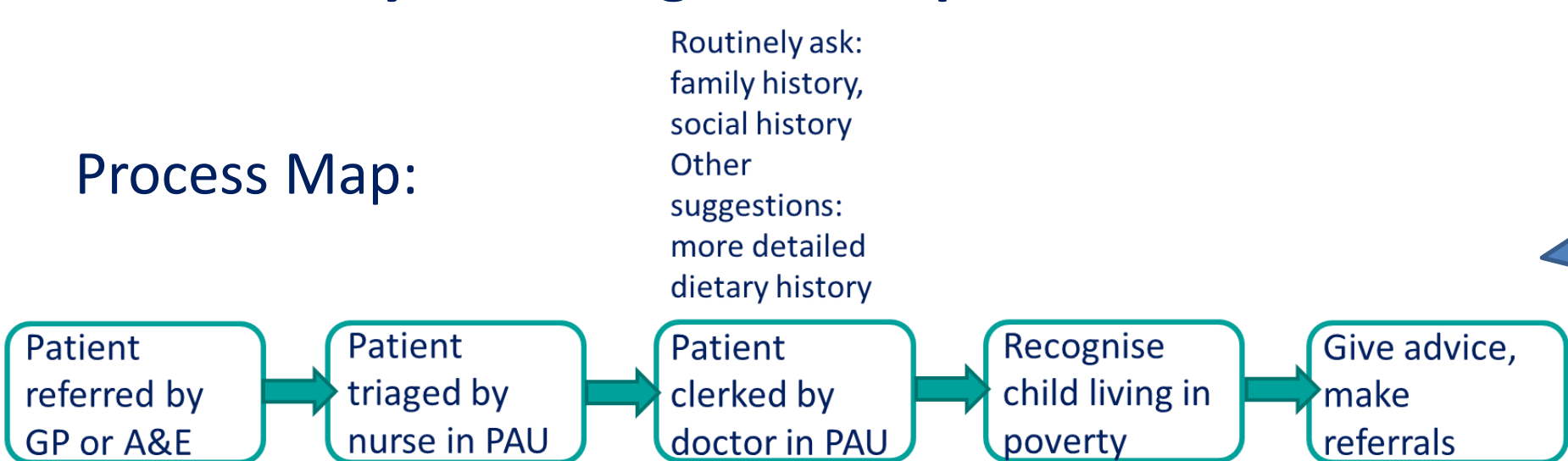
EXAMPLE CASE:

- Dad brought 5 month old baby to A&E at 3am with URTI
- Dad stressed about getting home – has to take 2 buses
 - Family history: mum has postnatal depression, has not touched baby for 1 week, 2 other children under 5
 - Social history: dad gave up work to look after mum and baby, no income or family support nearby, no holidays

Signposted to: Citizen's Advice, HomeStart, Welcare, Relate
Additional referrals: health visitor, social services, GP

Problem Analysis at Kingston Hospital

Process Map:

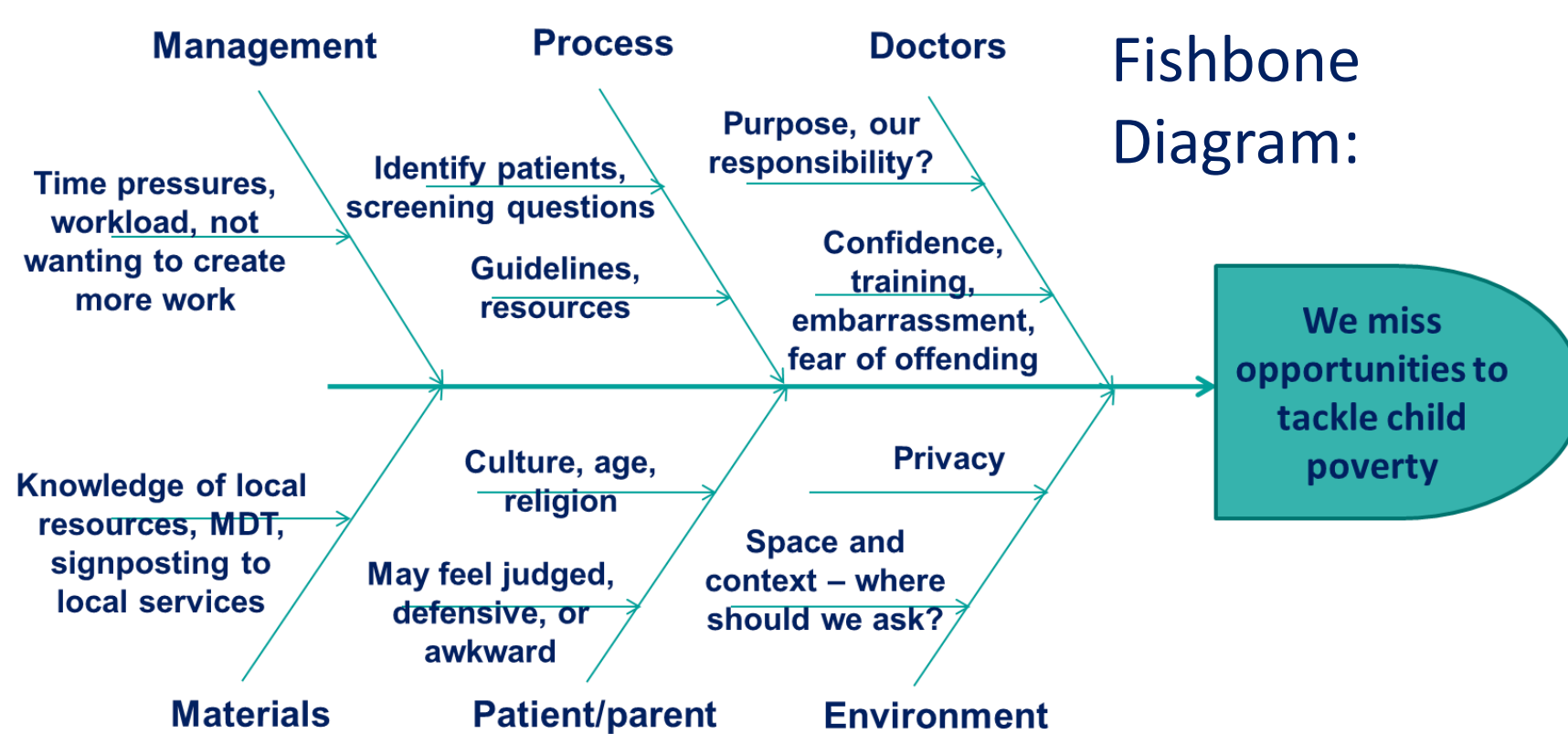


Routinely ask: family history, social history
Other suggestions: more detailed dietary history

Routinely ask: social worker, who lives at home, occupation
Should measure: weight, height, BMI

21% children in Kingston live in poverty

0% screened or signposted to local resources for poverty



Discussing poverty: HEADS (adapted from AHC)³

- Consider poverty cues:
- Chronic poor health
 - Housing concerns
 - Multiple children
 - Unemployment
 - Low wages/part time
 - Poor school attendance
 - Social isolation
 - Poor diet/insufficient food
 - Social worker
 - Drugs, domestic violence
- H**ome
Employment/Education
Activities
Diet
Safeguarding

CONCLUSIONS

Our project shows a dramatic improvement, from zero to >80%, in screening and resource awareness for child poverty amongst paediatricians. We can all play a role in helping families fight poverty in our clinical practice.

Model for Improvement

AIMS

By August 2019, >80% of paediatricians in the paediatric assessment unit (PAU) to screen for child poverty and offer local resources when appropriate.

MEASURES

- ◆ Percentage of paediatricians who screened for child poverty
- ◆ Percentage of paediatricians who were aware of local poverty resources
- ◆ Resources given and patient feedback

CHANGE IDEAS

1-2-3 approach, MDT resource leaflets, handouts, display in waiting and parents' rooms, triage, emails, microteaching, induction, guidelines, flashcards, HEADS

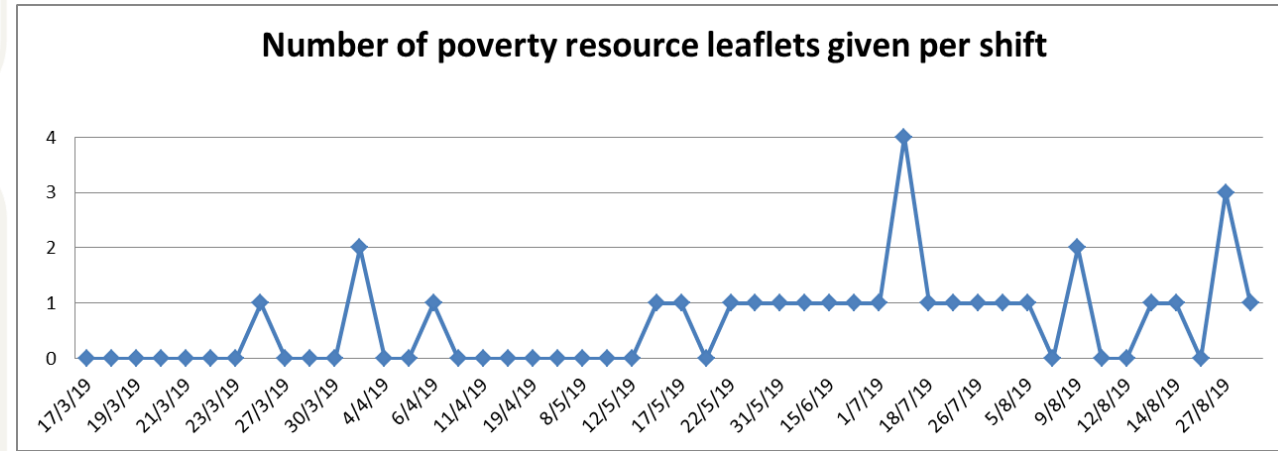
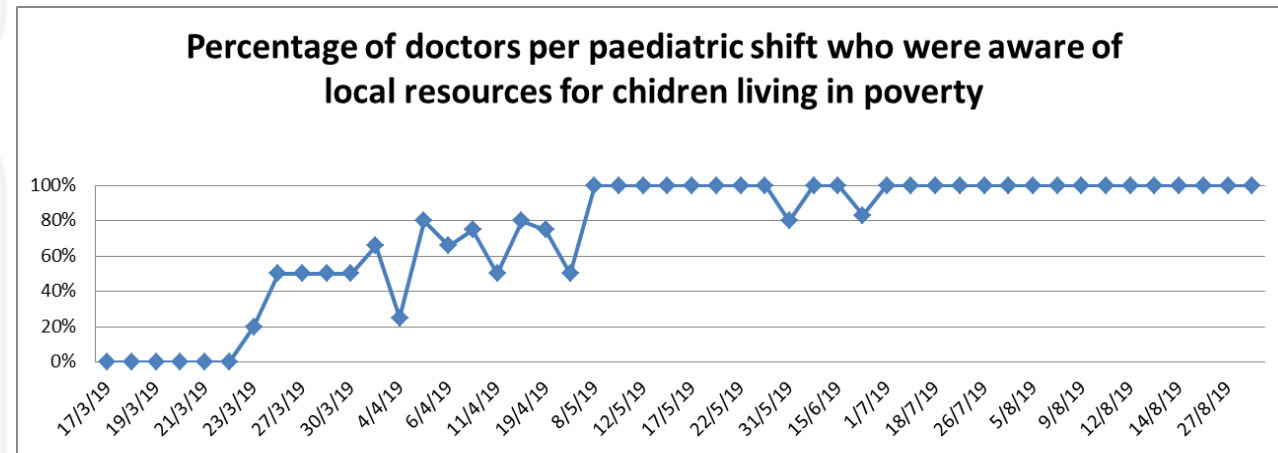
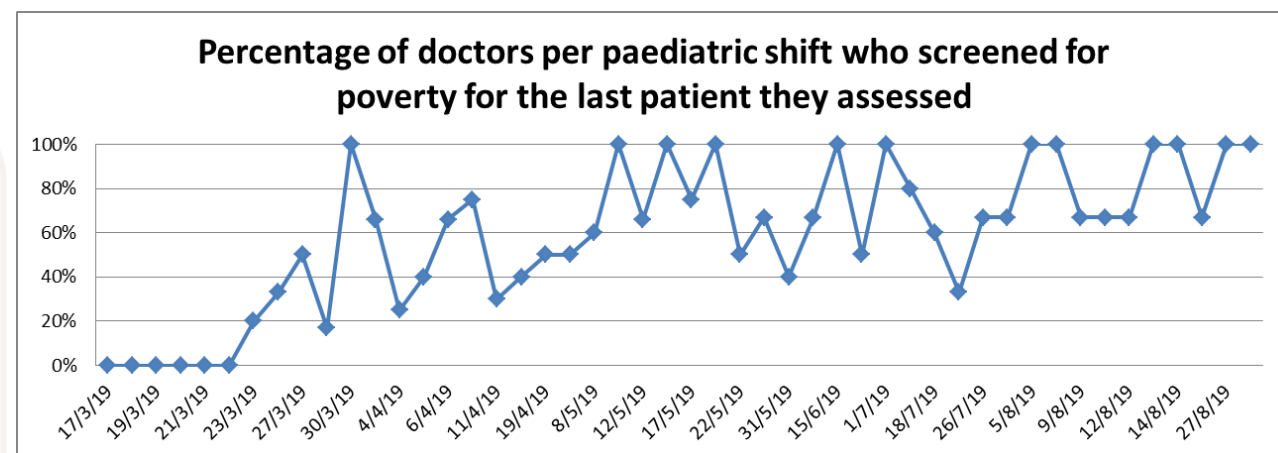


Figure: run charts showing measures, number of doctors per shift = 2-6

PDSA Test #	PLAN	Do	STUDY	ACT
1	Brainstorm potential screening questions for child poverty, knowing risk factors from BACAPH	Many questions shortlisted practice and reflect on asking these	Most questions too direct, need more context, non-intrusive universal question	Ask senior nurses and consultant champions for questions
2	Focus group of senior nurses and consultants to formulate screening tools for our paediatric assessment unit	Screening questions developed and tested with patients	Non-intrusive initial question: "Have you been on holiday in the last year?"	Implement these screening questions
3	Design and display local resources leaflet: social workers, family support workers, nurses, GPs	Screening and resource knowledge 0% → 50%	Positive feedback obtained, improvement from baseline	Disseminate in clinical areas, waiting areas
4	Increase awareness of screening questions and resource leaflet: email, whatsapp	With microteaching every shift, 60-80% screening, 100% resource knowledge	Only 4 leaflets given, not discussing poverty after screening, use of word "poverty" felt to be stigmatising	Design strategies to help discussion of poverty and confidence to offer resources
5	Removed "poverty" logo from resource leaflet, flashcard reminders with HEADS for poverty questions	Poverty teaching and role play, helpful phrasing for offering resources, patient quotes	Increase to median 1 leaflet given per shift, total >30 leaflets given, thankful patient feedback	Sustain results, incorporate into induction, spread to A&E, GP, clinics

Figure: Patient feedback after receiving resources



HOW TO OFFER SUPPORT:

"We want to help you with your child's health, not just for the problem today, but also for areas of life that affect your child's health now and in the future."
We are doing a project here telling families about local resources that can help you."

1-2-3 fight inequality

An army of local and national resources to help your family with money, provide essentials and participate more in local activities

1 Increase income

- NATIONAL DEBTLINE** Free helpline: 0800 808 4000 www.nationaldebtline.co.uk
- StepChange** Debt Charity Free debt advice www.stepchange.org Tel: 0800 138 1111
- citizens advice**
- PFNI** UK Bill Help www.billhelp.uk
- Glasspool** Charity Trust Small grants making a big difference www.glasspool.org.uk
- christians against poverty CAP** Help with debt, jobs, life skills: www.capuk.org
- chancesFOR CHILDREN** BUTTLEUK Education grants: www.buttleuk.org

For benefits/ universal credit advice: Kingston Citizens Advice, Neville House 55 Eden Street, Kingston, KT1 1BW www.citizensadvicekingston.org.uk Tel: 020 3166 0953

2 Provide essentials

- momentum** 139 Kings Road, Kingston, KT2 5JE info@momentum-um.org Tel: 020 8974 5931
- HomeStart** Support and friendship for families Baby essentials, parenting: HomeStart Richmond, Kingston, Hounslow info@homestart-rkh.org.uk Tel: 020 8487 8500
- KINGSTON FOODBANK** MAIN LOCATION Suite No. 1 444 Ewell Road, Tolworth Surrey KT6 7EL PHONE 020 8391 1100 WEBSITE http://kingston.foodbank.org.uk
- the trussell trust** Help with debt, jobs, life skills: www.capuk.org
- Shelter** Advice, support, legal services for people struggling with poor housing or homelessness www.england.shelter.org.uk

3 Improve participation

- YMCA** Youth clubs and other free activities: YMCA Surbiton, 49 Victoria Road, KT6 4NG | Tel: 020 8390 0148 | www.ymcastpaulsgroup.org
- THE MIX** Essential support for under 25s Free life advice: money, housing, health, relationships. www.themix.org Tel: 0800 808 4994
- Kingston WelCare** Making Families Stronger Charity No: 206286 Local families meeting, drop-in, playgroups, support groups, workshops. 53-55 Canbury Park Road Kingston, KT2 6LQ. Tel: 020 8546 3258 www.welcarekingston.org.uk
- Relationship support for families** (free for children) Tel: 0333 320 2206 www.relate.org.uk Kingston Relate 4th Floor, Neville House, 55 Eden Street, KT1 1BW
- Kingston Domestic Violence Hub** provides free, confidential, non-judgmental and independent support to anyone who is experiencing domestic violence. Tel: 020 8547 6046
- relate** Also see: www.allsaintskingston.co.uk

References

1. RCPCH Health Policy Team, State of Child Health Report 2017: www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/state-child-health-2017-full-report
2. RCPCH and Child Poverty Action Group, Poverty and Child Health: Views from the Frontline 2017: www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/poverty-child-health-views-frontline
3. The Accountable Health Communities Health-Related Social Needs Screening Tool: <https://innovation.cms.gov/files/worksheets/ahcm-screeningtool.pdf>