

Enhanced Family Support Service (EFSS) Webinar FAQs

1. Can a VCSE organisation be a lead?

Only a VCSE organisation can be a lead.

2. Do partnerships have to be solely between VCSE organisations or can statutory services also be involved?

Investment for the Enhanced Family Support Service (EFSS) will only be for VCSE organisations. However, EFSS grant holders will work in partnership with statutory service reps.

3. What are the ages the children should be within a family?

Targeting from pre-birth to 18.

4. Can we get a copy of the slides?

You can find a copy of slides here: [Together for Families | Department of Health](#)

5. Has the lead partner been identified and the localities where the 15 EFSS teams agreed?

The lead partner has not been identified in any locality. Proposals are welcomed from VCSE organisations identifying their preferred lead partner. The 15 EFSS teams will be aligned to the 15 Gateway Teams across the five HSCTs.

6. Please could you provide a bit more information about the 'family support open list' - if an organisation wants to get on it, is this separate to the main partnership applications please?

Yes, the Family Support Open List is separate to the Enhanced Family Support Service. If you want to be informed of any upcoming information on the Open List, you can do so by registering to the Together for Families distribution list at togetherforfamilies@health-ni.gov.uk.

7. Can I ask how partners are chosen? I work privately within the VCSE sector so do not have established links with any HSCT partners.

Partnerships should be self-forming within the VCSE network at locality level.

- 8. Are families/ children who already have child on the child protection register not eligible for this fund? You mentioned referral but no statutory input required. Our project has supported a lot of families/ mums/ babies who need support to get off the register, and we have been successful in supporting many to do this -is it before that stage only?**

Yes, the Enhanced Family Support Service are for those families who do not require statutory social work intervention. The families you mention above can be supported through the Together for Families Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS).

- 9. How long the funding is for?**

The funding will run until March 2029.

- 10. Will there be any minutes/feedback shared from the in-person sessions?**

No formal minute will be provided following the in-person Market Engagement sessions. You are encouraged to attend one of the sessions if you have an interest in applying for the Enhanced Family Support Service funding.

- 11. As this has only recently been announced and applications are opening September, how long will the fund actually be opened?**

The application window will be open from September 2026 to October 2026.

- 12. If we are not at the point in September with a partnership, can we apply later when the partnership has been established?**

The Enhanced Family Support Service will be under continual evaluation and learning from this may create opportunities for partnerships to review their resources and services.

- 13. Will the fund be delivered through The National Lottery or Department for Health?**

The Enhanced Family Support Service is National Lottery Funded but funding will be distributed through Department of Health.

- 14. Can you clarify where the needs of families who have children that have experienced sexual abuse will be met?**

The Enhanced Family Support Service will respond to identified local need and local partnerships should reflect this in their service offer.

- 15. Will there be limitations on the number of lots / a lead partner can apply for?**

Full guidance on the application process will be shared in September 2026.