

Drivers of demand in children's social care

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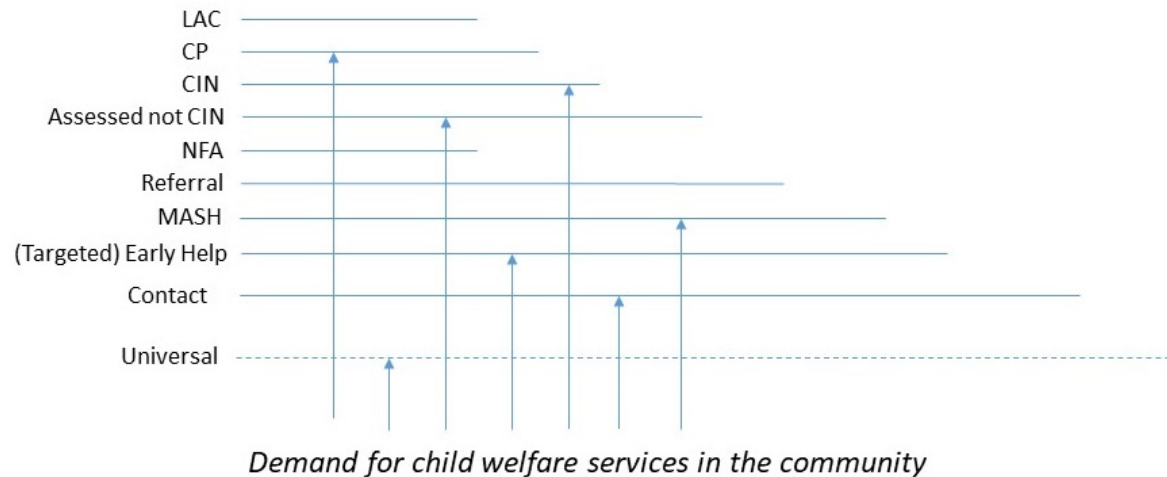
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What do we mean by demand?

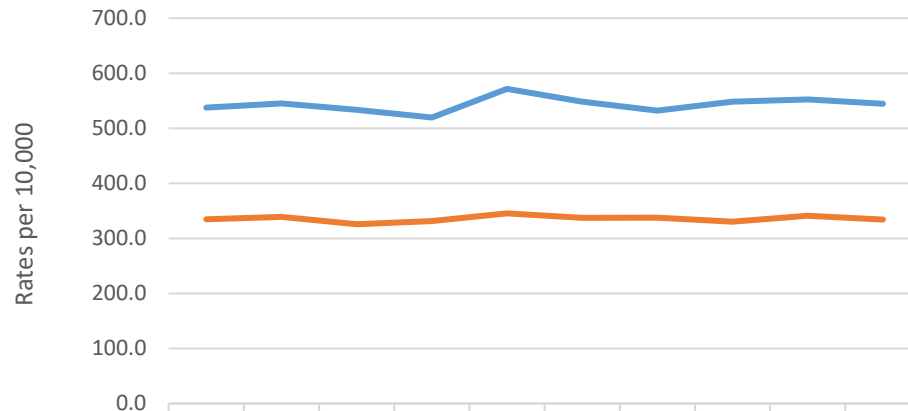
- Demand vs need
- Role of professionals and institutions, statutory definitions and criteria
- Overlapping functions: service provision and regulation
- Tiered system – statutory thresholds + demand management





What's happening to demand?

Rates of referrals and CIN (2009-19)

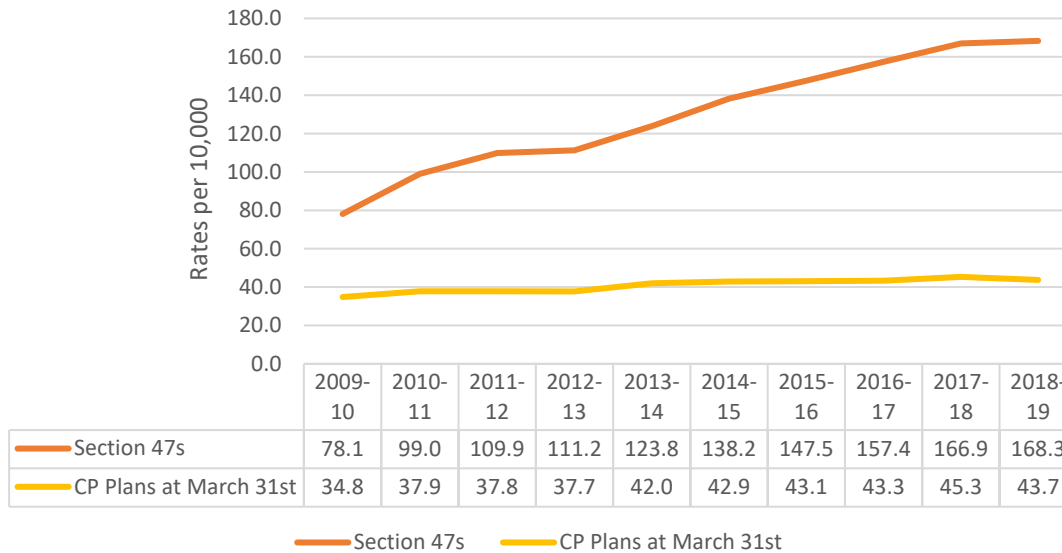


	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Referrals	537.5	545.2	533.6	519.6	571.7	548.3	532.2	548.2	552.5	544.5
CIN at March 31st	334.7	339.0	325.7	331.4	345.5	337.3	337.7	330.4	341.0	334.2

Referrals CIN at March 31st

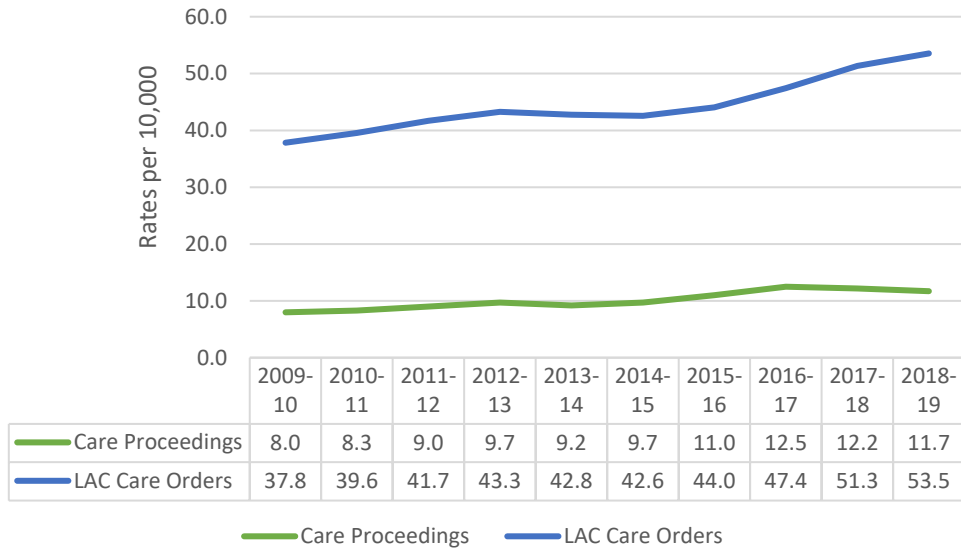
What's happening to demand?

Rates of S47 inquiries and CP plans (2009-19)



What's happening to demand?

Rates of care proceedings and care orders (2009-19)



Why the shift to late(r) intervention?

- **Usual suspects**
 - Economic slowdown + austerity policies = more hardship for families -> higher levels of need
 - Cuts to LA budgets (particularly affecting deprived areas) -> forces councils to shut down preventative services -> escalation of problems (NB this is a vicious circle)
 - Risk management – societal risks (abuse and neglect) and institutional risks (accountability pressures) (Rothstein et al.,
- **Other candidates**
 - ECM and safeguarding created broader mandate for statutory intervention (Devine and Parker, 2015)
 - Inequality – social gradient of intervention is higher in more unequal LAs (Webb et al., 2020)
 - Demand management and rationing not enough to counteract rise in demand and may be exacerbating problem (Hood et al., 2019)
 - Ofsted inspections may encourage risk-averse behaviour (Hood et al., forthcoming)
 - Services on offer are not geared towards what children and families want or need (Featherstone et al., 2018)
- **Contextual factors**
 - Leadership makes a difference (Ofsted, 2015)
 - Short term drivers (Hood, et al., 2020), e.g. housing and demographics, practice innovation, emerging issues (e.g. UASC, CSE, county lines)

Concluding points

- **Address inequities in the funding formula** so that resources for the most deprived local authorities are commensurate with the needs and hardships of the child population.
- **Rebalance CSC** from high-cost late intervention by investing in prevention, not just Early Help but rebuilding capacity and resources in communities.
- **Redesign services** to focus on strategic problem areas, drawing on agencies' knowledge of the local safeguarding context

<http://www.healthcare.ac.uk/system-conditions-and-inequalities-in-childrens-social-care/>

References

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