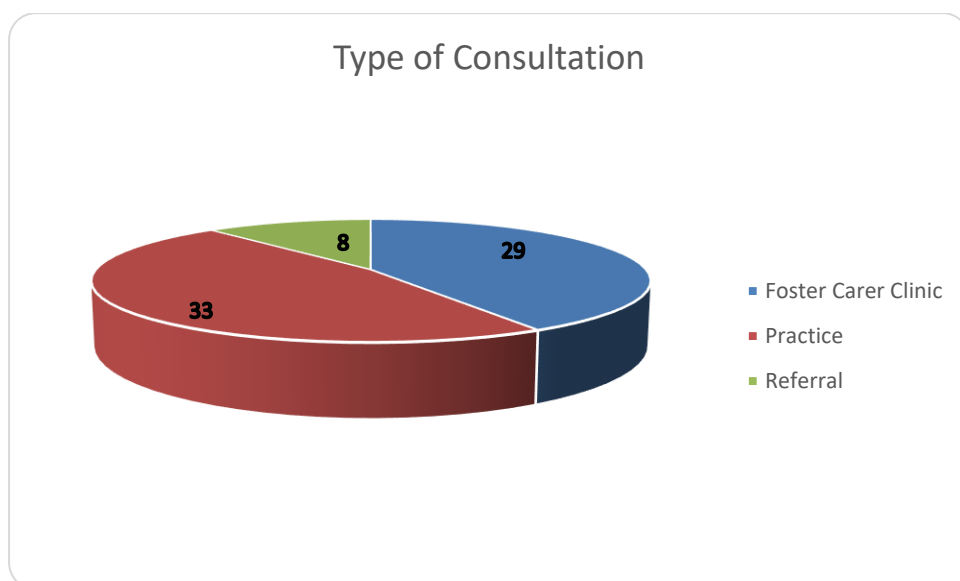


**Blaenau Gwent - Monmouthshire MyST Consultation Service**  
**Evaluation Audit 2020 - 2021**

Alongside our intensive placement-based work, MyST aims to be as accessible and supportive as possible to Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire young people who are at the Edge of Care or Looked After. Part of this work involves providing consultation to foster carers, parents, kinship carers, social workers and direct workers to help to understand young people’s psychological needs and develop ideas about ways to meet these needs. All consultees are asked to give us their feedback anonymously so that we can understand more about the impacts that the consultations have, what works well and how they might be improved.

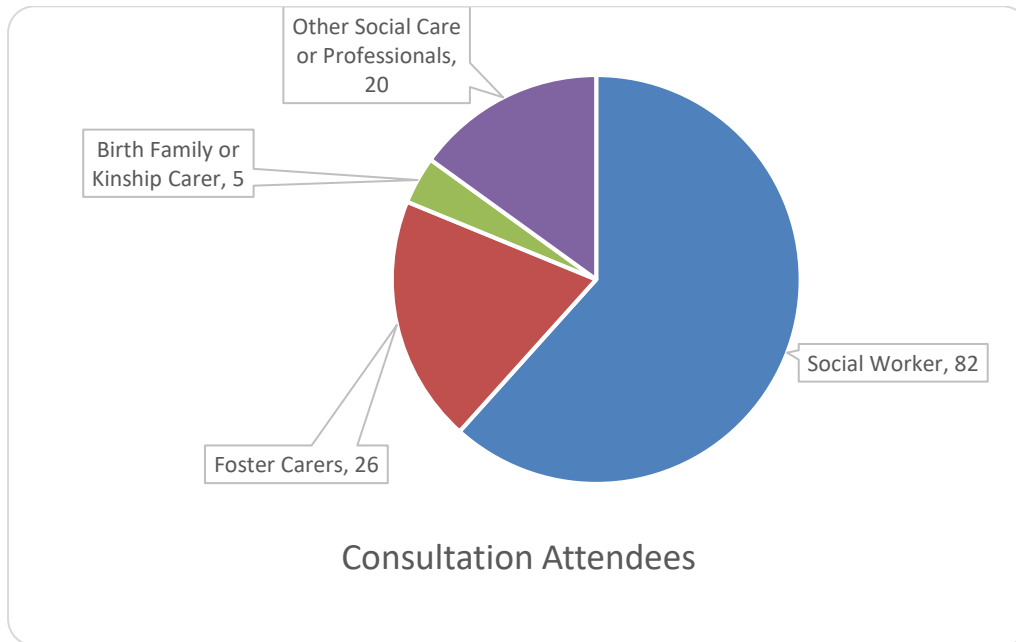
This audit looked at the completed evaluation forms from all those who returned them between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. During this period, 70 consultations took place. Of 70 consultations, 13 of these consulted with us more than once. Out of the 70 consultations held 133 people attended, 34 of these people returned an evaluation form.

Our consultation criteria is split into three categories these are, practice consultations (with professional colleagues to support their own practice with a child and family), foster carer clinic consultations and referral consultations (to discuss a referral into our intensive direct work service), the below graph demonstrates the number of each provided during the period.



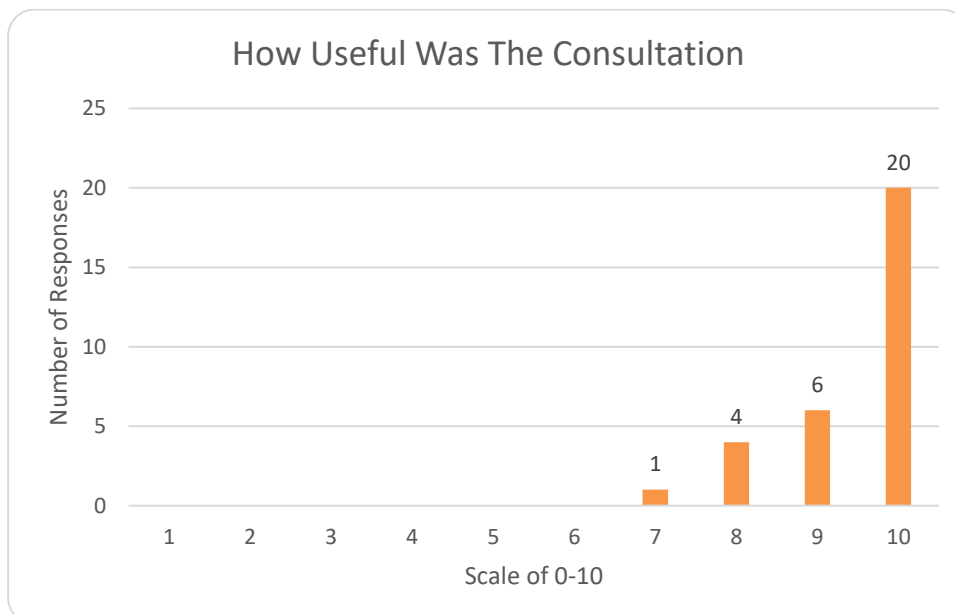
It is worth noting in addition to the 70 consultations that took place in regards to the above categories and additional 34 On-Going consultations took place as part of an intensive workload, carried out usually by the services psychologist or manager.

It is usual for more than one person to attend each consultation of the 70 consultations provided there were 133 attendees; the graph demonstrates the breakdown of these attendees.



The evaluation forms asked attendees to answer the following two questions:

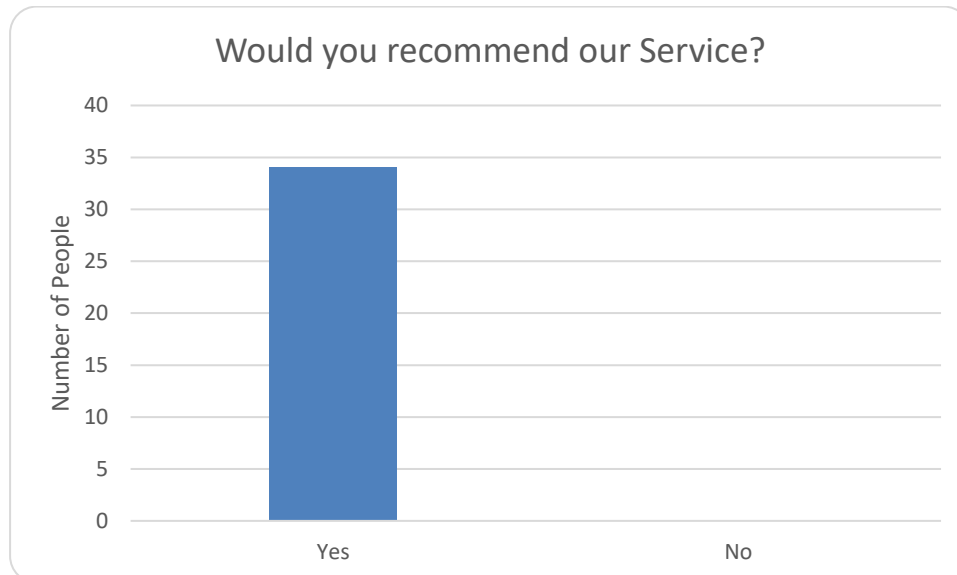
1. How useful was the consultation on a scale of 0-10? (0 being not at all and 10 being extremely useful) The following responses were given:



**59% of attendees said their consultation was extremely valuable.**

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2. Would you recommend our service? The following responses were given:



**100% of attendees said they would recommend our service.**

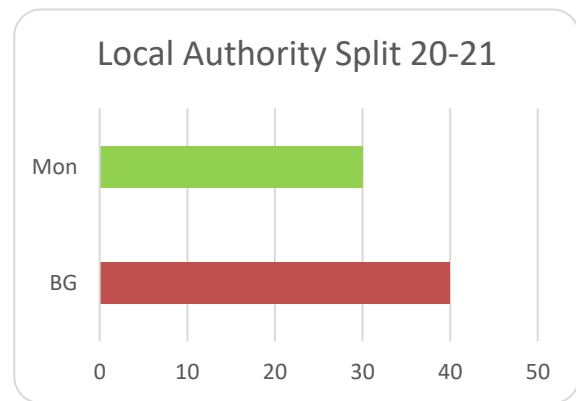
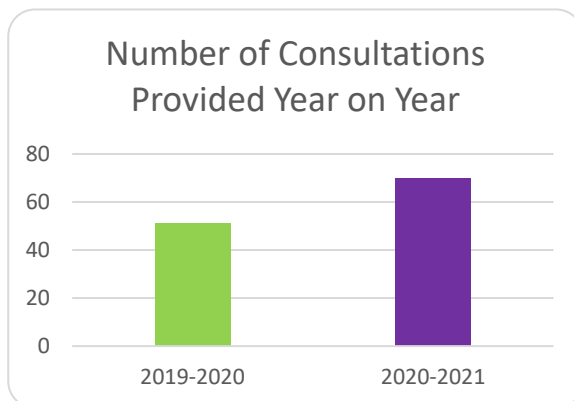
Below is an example of some of this year's qualitative feedback that was provided:

- Helpful to talk and helpful to have feedback about what they're doing and ideas about to what we're doing to refresh our learning.
- Can I say 11+? I feel so happy that I've spoken to you and less overwhelmed
- You were brilliant, that's really helped us. Loads of ideas now
- Nice to be able to discuss and get other ideas and know we're not on our own with it.
- The session was significant and useful as a support mechanism for the foster carers.
- useful and beneficial to have frank and open discussion and think about strategies and how best to support
- nice to discuss as touch on things not yet been thought of and see it with fresh eyes.
- Really enjoyed it, so helpful- brought up dimensions we'd not thought of and will help to work. Like it was holistic
- entirely helpful and useful for staff team - so good to marry up approaches and think about ideas. Thanks.
- really helpful to share ideas and also be reminded of my own skills to use.
- gained a really good insight into this young person in a very short space of time and feel you've got her and understood.
- Both MYST practitioners were extremely knowledgeable, welcoming of other professionals during the consultation, throughout the entire consultation I felt I was heard, supported and provided with recognition.

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- It also provided me with reassurance that there is further support for myself to ensure that I am supporting in the most appropriate way to help the family identify/manage the complexities in their lives, help to implement new and more effective strategies and achieve change.
- The session gave me a clearer picture of how to work with this young person and I came away with more confidence in how I could support her and how the team around her could work. It was also good to understand that the way I have been working with her was correct. The hour flew!

Below figures, show the increase demand for consultations, since the start of the service in 2019, however it is important to remember that the service covers two boroughs, from the latest figures we can see the consultation service is being utilised more by the Blaenau Gwent borough.



### Discussion

Given the pandemic, it has been an exceptionally difficult year for everybody. MyST’s priority during this time was to offer the same high quality support to our intensive casework, despite this we have still managed to carry out a large number of consultations. Due to the high number of attendees at these consultations, we are disappointed with the low number of feedback evaluations. It is notable that the pandemic brought about a shift to online consultation meetings and this may have influenced upon uptake and returns of evaluation feedback.

The feedback that has been provided is extremely positive. It is notable that there were no negative comments about the consultations.

Qualitative feedback confirms the consultations offer a space for discussion and to check, possibly reaffirm actions the care-givers took and evaluate these in a safe environment. It has been raised that MyST offer useful ideas and identify helpful pieces of work, which would benefit the young people and the carers. One attendee advised, “I feel so happy that I’ve spoken to you and less overwhelmed” this highlights the value the MyST consultation service offers to the local authority foster carers and social workers outside of our core objectives of the service.

Cariad Warrilow – Regional Systems & Resource Coordinator – MyST &

May 2021